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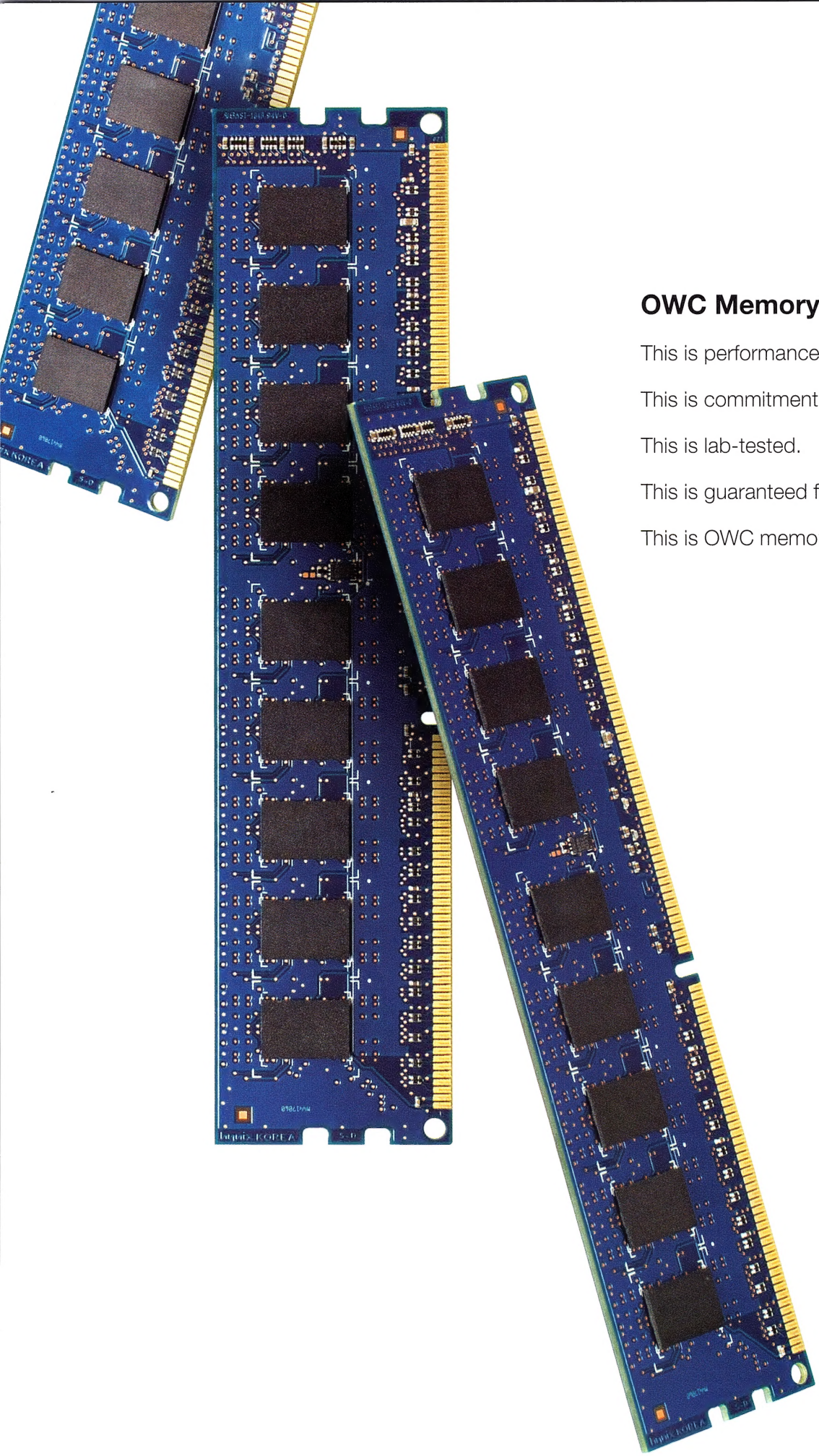

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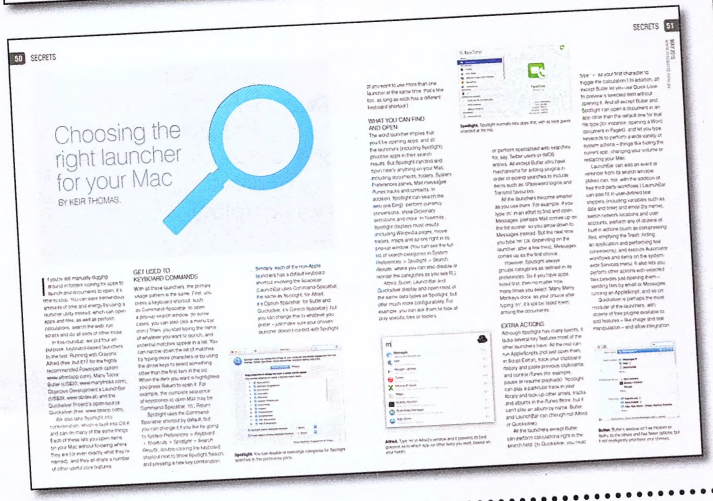
Now that Apple has launched the Apple Watch, what do you need to know? Find out here.



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A farewell and goodbye

It is with a heavy heart that I am leaving *Macworld Australia*. I have had a fantastic chance to delve into the Apple world with you all, but it is time I moved on to a new experience and focused my efforts on a new challenge.

The Apple events, product reviews and ever-changing rumours will remain with me wherever I go and much of that has been the result of this community. I got a fantastic opportunity to work on *Macworld Australia* after a, possibly too-short, internship and I have enjoyed the ride ever since.

So, before I am ejected from the *Macworld Australia* offices, I thought I would look back at the three years I have been here and document my five biggest Apple moments.

5. iPhone 5. The launch of the iPhone 5 heralded the arrival of a sleek, new iPhone with extra screen real estate. With the inclusion of aluminium and coloured models, it was hugely popular, with over two million units sold in the first 24 hours.

4. iOS 7. Apple's mobile operating system had been the cleanest on the market, but iOS 7 gave it a much needed refresh. It was weird at first, but looking back at previous operating systems makes me glad Jony Ive turned his hand to software.

3. Retina displays. From the new MacBook all the way back to the original Macintosh, the evolution of the displays in Apple's computers has been exponential. Take a look at the 5K iMac – thin, vibrant and with screen real estate to burn.

2. Mac Pro. The revamped Mac Pro in 2013 looked a little like a small, black rubbish bin, but it is an incredible machine with an equally beautiful design. Who would have thought the Mac Pro tower could have been shrunk to its size?

1. Apple Watch. I was hesitant to mention the Apple Watch at first, but it soon became clear that, in my time, Apple's wearable has been the biggest change. I missed the iPod, iPhone and iPad launches, but I was lucky enough to see the beginning of a huge product channel for the team at Cupertino. One that will get better and better over time.

Long-time contributor Anthony Caruana will be taking the reins and, I'm sure, steering them in a more positive direction. Anthony has been writing for *Macworld Australia* since 2005 and has a rich knowledge of the technology industry from a huge range of work with a dizzying number of titles.

I'm sure you will make him welcome.

STAFF PICKS

Favourite apps on your iPhone right now.

JONATHAN STEWART

AFL
Footy season is here and the best way to stay up-to-date is to dive into the official app.

MADELEINE SWAIN

GOLDEN DAYS RADIO
The Golden Days Radio app – 'the music is heaven on 95.7' and it broadcasts my film reviews too (plug).

TYNAN McCARTHY

PODCASTS
An oldie but a goodie. Just makes the commute to and from work that much easier.

MONIQUE BLAIR

BUBBLE MANIA
Currently my favourite app on my phone is Bubble Mania. It definitely kills the time during the daily commutes to work.

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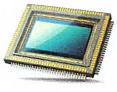

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HAVE YOUR SAY

LETTER OF THE MONTH

THE MISSING 17 INCHES

We keep hearing about Apple and its band of merry executives touting the virtues of the Mac for professionals. Really?!

Unfortunately, they seem to have forgotten the core group of 'professionals', a small group though we may be, who helped Apple build the brand and reputation it has today. We are the designers, filmmakers and photographers of the world. Unfortunately too, the product managers and designers seem to have lost focus on the importance of screen real estate.

As a professional and very mobile designer I despair every time I hear of the latest release of portable Macs from Apple. Where's my screen space gone? I can barely fit a document window on screen now, let alone fit any palettes beside the document to work with. Lucky for me my 'old' MacBook Pro still has some fight left in her. But, alas, when she next gets sick, there is no support and no new parts available to make her well again.

The loss of the 17in MacBook Pro a few years ago was just the beginning of the current trend to make professional mobile equipment smaller – "Honey, I shrunk the Macs!" the executives cry out with glee. "That should boost sales and cost us less in production."

On the flip side of that we are seeing phones getting larger. Interesting…

I really don't know the demographics of the 'professional' market Apple is aiming at, road warriors and the like I expect. Which is fine, but please, Apple, please, please bring back the 17in MacBook Pro. We, 'the professionals' need it back. We need the screen real estate. We are all begging for them. Please, please, please.

I really look forward to once again buying a brand new 17in MacBook Pro, hopefully in the not too distant future. Before I retire would be nice.

I hope you won't let us down because the 'shareholders' may not get their maximum dividend. Maybe they might sit up and take notice after 'we professionals' jump ship to PC… heaven forbid.

I really love OS X, albeit with more and more omissions and a few annoying bugs creeping in, but if push comes to shove, I need to function productively and quickly, wherever I am.

Rob

TARGETED PRODUCT

In reference to *Macworld Australia*'s online article, 'Why the new MacBook's single port is all you really need' (bit.ly/1BNvj1h), the last sentence sells the argument. It will likely be adequate for many users. Great. If you need more, buy something else.

For me personally, I'm still grieving the loss off the optical drive, which I use seldom but appreciate when I've got a CD or DVD to install something from. I am old enough to remember when laptops became notebooks, when desktops didn't have optical drives and some programs needed 30 floppy discs to do a full install (and HDDs were 40 MB, yes I did say Megabytes). I rejoiced in the addition of the CD drive in the early '90s and again in 2000 when I bought my first notebook with a DVD drive built in.

For the moment I still at least need to be able to plug in a USB stick. But that's me.

Billie

WILL IT STACK UP?

My only concern with the new MacBook is the M processor. If they have found a way to disperse the heat generated, then this could be the answer to all my prayers, as I travel a lot, and my old 2010 MacBook Pro is starting to get a bit long in the tooth. The processor will be the make or break for me.

Jeremiah

ADAPTING TO THE MACBOOK

What is the point of a lightweight notebook if you have to carry an adapter everywhere? I imagine many users are going to be disappointed that they can't plug in the ubiquitous USB key to exchange files with others.

Milliways

IT'S POSSIBLE TO WORK THIS WAY

My 11in MacBook Air is my main laptop and although in my office I have a monitor, keyboard and mouse for how often I am there, I may as well not have bothered. The only thing I carry around with my MBA is an adapter in case I need to use a data projector and a mouse that I use from time to time… I'm not seeing any issues with one port on the new MacBook.

John

FEATURE-BLOAT?

In regards to the article, 'The Apple Watch is flirting with feature-bloat, putting sublime simplicity at risk' (bit.ly/1MwJEJZ), Jon, give us a break. We all know that, unlike Samsung and the rest of the competition, Apple has actually taken its time over the last three years making sure all these features work. Which is unlike Samsung, which produces devices that are the veritable definition of pointless, unworkable feature-bloat.

There are plenty of articles that have harped on about all the features that Apple tried out for the Apple Watch and dropped as they failed to work in the real world. If Apple goes and releases a feature-poor device with no third-party apps, Apple would be in far more danger of being deemed irrelevant in the smartwatch market.

Give it credit for taking the time to make the watch functional, beautiful, compelling and of lasting utility.

Rocwurst

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- Comments on stories or Forum posts on www.macworld.com.au are also eligible for the prize.
- We reserve the right to edit letters and probably will.
- Letters of fewer than 200 words are given preference.

This month's prize to the *Macworld Australia* reader who has submitted what we think is the most interesting letter is an 8ware 6-Port Desktop USB Charging Station, worth $54.95, from Anyware.

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS. Letter of the month 1. Instructions on how to enter form part of these conditions of entry. 2. To enter send tips or queries to editor@macworld.com.au with a subject header of "Letter to the Editor". Entries will be judged by the editorial staff of *Macworld Australia*. The judges' decision in relation to any aspect of the competition is final and binding on every person who enters. No correspondence will be entered into. Chance plays no part in determining the winner(s). Each entry will be individually judged based on its degree of interest. 4. Employees, their immediate families and agencies associated with this competition are not permitted to enter. 5. The Promoter accepts no responsibility for late or misdirected entries. 6. The best entry/entries as determined by the judges will win the prize(s). 7. The Promoter is neither responsible nor liable for any change in the value of the prize occurring between the publish date and the date the prize(s) is claimed. 8. The prize(s) is not transferable and will not be exchanged for cash. 9. The winner(s) will be notified by email. 10. All entries become the property of the Promoter. 11. The collection, use and disclosure of personal information provided in connection with this competition is governed by the Privacy Notice 12. The Promoter is Niche Media Pty Ltd of 142 Dorcas Street, South Melbourne, Victoria 3205 Ph 03 9948 4900, (ABN 13 064 613 529).

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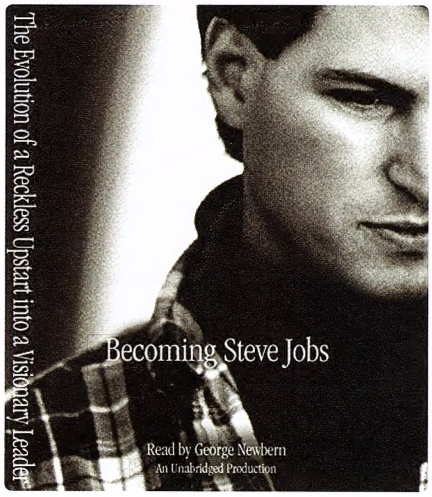


APPLE GIVES STAMP OF APPROVAL TO NEW STEVE JOBS BIOGRAPHY

Just when you thought you knew everything there was to know about Steve Jobs, a new book is about to set the record straight with some help from Apple.

Becoming Steve Jobs, an unauthorised biography from Fast Company reporters Brent Schlender and Rick Tetzeli, wasn't given the stamp of approval from Jobs himself, but the book has plenty of support from Apple. CEO Tim Cook, design head Jony Ive and Eddy Cue, Apple's senior VP of software and services, have all publicly bashed Walter Isaacson's official look at Jobs, which was published after his death in 2011. Jobs picked Isaacson to write his biography and didn't exert any editorial control over the end result, which painted the Apple co-founder in a largely unflattering light.

"I thought the Isaacson book did him a tremendous disservice," Cook said in a new *Becoming Steve Jobs* excerpt published in Fast Company (bit.ly/1CoQVoS). "It was just a rehash of a bunch of stuff that had already been written, and focused on small parts of his personality. You get the feeling that [Steve's] a greedy, selfish egomaniac. It didn't capture the person. The person I read about there is somebody I would never have wanted to work with over all this time. Life is too short."

Apple gave Schlender and Tetzeli access to Cook and other executives. In return, the authors let the company read the finished version before publication, though Apple wasn't allowed to make any changes that weren't related to factual errors.

Isaacson also had access to Apple executives and to Jobs himself, which Schlender and Tetzeli didn't have (though Schlender interviewed Jobs many times prior to his death). But it seems like *Becoming Steve Jobs* is a hit, at least with Apple. *Wired*'s Steven Levy, who also knew Jobs, judges Isaacson's biography less harshly in an opinion piece at Medium, but also says, "Only in *Becoming Steve Jobs* do I recognise the complexity and warmth that I saw first-hand in Jobs, particularly in the last few years of his life."

"After a long period of reflection following Steve's death, we felt a sense of responsibility to say more about the Steve we knew," Apple spokesman Steve Dowling told *The New York Times* (nyti.ms/1LMu4JM). "We decided to participate in Brent and Rick's book because of Brent's long relationship with Steve, which gave him a unique perspective on Steve's life. The book captures Steve better than anything else we've seen, and we are happy we decided to participate."

SNOWDEN DOCS SHOW CIA'S ATTEMPTS TO HACK APPLE DEVICES

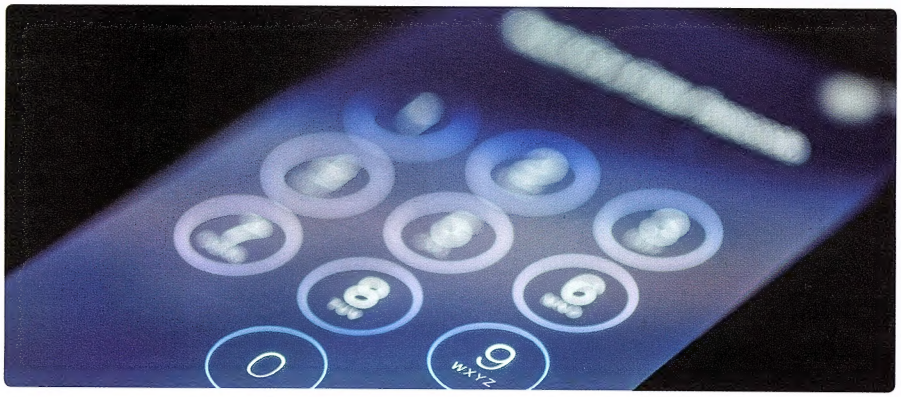
Researchers sponsored by the US Government have reportedly tried to defeat the encryption and security of Apple devices for years.

Several presentations given between 2010 and 2012 at a conference sponsored by the US Central Intelligence Agency described attempts to decrypt the firmware in Apple mobile devices or to backdoor Mac OS X and iOS applications by poisoning developer tools.

Abstracts of the secret presentations were among the documents leaked by former US National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden to journalists and were published in March.

The US intelligence community's interest in hacking Apple products goes back as far as 2010, when a researcher presented possible methods of implanting the iPhone 3GS with malware at an annual conference called the Trusted Computing Base Jamboree, which, according to *The Intercept*, is sponsored by the CIA's Information Operations Center. The presentation also covered ways to jailbreak the device.

Over the next couple of years, the same conference included more talks on ways to bypass the security of Apple devices. For example, in 2011 researchers presented



a technique to 'non-invasively' extract the cryptographic key that's used to encrypt the firmware of devices based on Apple's A4 processor, like the iPhone 4, the iPod Touch and the first generation iPad.

The key, which is called the Group ID (GID), is stored inside the physical chip. The researchers tried to recover it by studying the electromagnetic emissions that occur during Advanced Encryption Standard (AES) operations, a technique known as differential power analysis.

"If successful, it would enable decryption and analysis of the boot firmware for vulnerabilities, and development of associated exploits across entire A4-based product-line," they wrote in a description of their presentation.

It's not clear if the researchers ever succeeded in recovering the key, but their presentation covered the progress they had made until then.

A separate talk described methods of determining where the GID key was located on the A4 integrated circuit and how it could be recovered through an invasive technique like the 'physical de-processing of the chip'.

By the following year the A5 processor used in the iPhone 4s, iPad 2, iPod Touch fifth generation and the iPad mini was also being targeted. Researchers from Sandia National Laboratories, a Federally Funded Research and Development Center (FFRDC) operated by Lockheed Martin subsidiary Sandia Corporation, had a talk entitled 'Apple A4/A5 Application Processors Analysis'. The presentation had no abstract and attendees looking for more information about it were instead instructed to call or email a CIA official.

It wasn't just Apple's master encryption keys that the US intelligence community was interested in, but also the individual keys used by private developers to sign their iOS or Mac OS X apps.

Researchers from Sandia Labs gave a talk about their efforts to create a modified, or 'whacked' version of Xcode, the free tool that developers use to create software for Apple devices. The poisoned version of Xcode could insert a backdoor into any applications created with it, hide the confirmation prompts when a developer's private key was exported and embed a developer's key into all iOS apps created with the tool, from where it could be later extracted.

"We also describe how we modified both the Mac OS X updater to install an extra kernel extension (a keylogger) and the Xcode installer to include our SDK [software development kit] whacks," the researchers wrote in their talk's description.

The FBI and US intelligence agencies have voiced concern over the past year that the increased addition of default encryption to mobile devices and internet communications make lawful electronic surveillance impossible. They call this the Going Dark problem.

Such agencies would like to see an approach where companies could offer encryption, but also be able to comply with government requests for data. Many security experts and privacy advocates believe this would involve building backdoors into encryption implementations that could also be exploited by hackers.

"I want to be absolutely clear that we have never worked with any government agency from any country to create a backdoor in any of our products or services," Apple CEO Tim Cook wrote in an open letter in September. "We have also never allowed access to our servers. And we never will."

JURY CLEARS APPLE OF INFRINGING PATENTS FORMERLY HELD BY NOKIA

A Texas jury has found that Apple didn't infringe on five wireless technology patents

that once belonged to Nokia and were sold to patent licensing firm Conversant.

In 2012, Core Wireless, which is a subsidiary of Conversant, sued Apple in the US District Court for the Eastern District of Texas, Tyler Division, alleging iPads and iPhones used technology covered by Core patents to transmit data. Core was seeking a portion of the revenue Apple made from selling the devices and would make from future sales. Core's lawsuit initially claimed that Apple infringed on more patents. According to court documents, patents were removed over the years to simplify the case.

The jury also rejected Apple's claim that Core didn't license the patents, which are considered essential, on fair, reasonable and non-discriminatory terms.

Conversant purchased Core in 2011 and in the process acquired 2000 Nokia patents and patent applications. Microsoft had to license those Nokia patents as part of the 2011 negotiations over Windows Phone becoming the main mobile platform for Nokia's phones. Conversant, which was then called Mosaid, licensed the patents to third parties, kept an eye on potential infringers and shared a portion of the revenue with Microsoft and Nokia.

The patents and patent applications cover 2G, 3G and LTE (Long Term Evolution) and are used in many wireless products, Conversant said.

HOT STUFF

A selection of Apple, Mac and iOS news from Macworld.com.au

iFIXIT TEARS DOWN 2015 13IN RETINA MACBOOK PRO

If you can't get your fingers on the Force Touch trackpad in the new MacBook, there may be another option. The new trackpad – which simulates clicks by vibrating a taptic engine, even though the trackpad itself isn't hinged and doesn't move – makes an appearance in the newly refreshed 13in Retina MacBook Pro as well.

iFixit tore down a new Retina MacBook Pro (bit.ly/1MqUq4v) in March and discovered some secrets Apple didn't reveal at its special event. For starters, the trackpad has its own chips, including an ST Microelecronics 32F103 ARM Cortex-M based microcontroller and a Broadcom BCM5976 touch digitiser (also found in the iPhone 5s and iPad Air).

Apple said the early 2015 Retina MacBook Pro would enjoy a little extra battery life over the previous version, which makes sense because it's using Intel's more efficient Broadwell chipset. But iFixit found the battery is larger too, up to 74.9 watt-hours, four percent larger than the late 2013 model. It's not even one battery: iFixit dug out an array of lithium-polymer cells, which were covering the trackpad assembly. (The large amounts of glue keeping the batteries secured contributed to the Retina MacBook Pro's pretty dismal reparability score of 1, on a scale of 10.)

At the time of the breakdown, iFixit isn't convinced that the Force Touch trackpad in this Retina MacBook Pro is the same as what we'll see in the MacBook, but it likely works the same way: a series of electromagnets "push and pull against a metal rail mounted beneath the trackpad, to create a tiny 'buzz' of feedback with each click (and a second buzz for a 'force click')".

This buzzing is enough to make you forget the trackpad isn't physically clicking. Because software controls the taptic engine, you can even tweak how hard you'll have to press to trigger 'clicks' and 'force clicks' right in System Preferences.

ANALYSTS: LIKE THE '08 AIR, NEW MACBOOK REVEALS APPLE'S INTENTIONS

Apple's new thinner, lighter and nearly port-less MacBook is a peek at where the Cupertino company will take its laptops, according to an analyst.

"The MacBook is an engineering showcase regarding Apple's overall push toward miniaturisation over the next three to five years," says Tim Bajarin of Creative Strategies. "It's an important statement about the way Apple believes the market should move."

In March, Apple introduced the MacBook, a 12in laptop that starts at $1799.

Bajarin points to several elements of the MacBook that tipped Apple's longer-term plans for its notebooks, including miniaturised logic boards – which allow a case even thinner than the slim line MacBook Air – the multi-use USB-C port, and the revamped trackpad that features vibrational feedback.

"It's also driving toward wireless," says Bajarin, of the hint at a more distant future provided by the MacBook's port subtraction. "Notebooks won't have any ports, even charging will be wireless."

What Apple now has in the MacBook will migrate to other lines, just as happened with the original MacBook Air, which debuted in 2008. That laptop – which was an expensive proposition at launch – foreshadowed the slimming of other models (the business-grade MacBook Pro and the consumer-oriented iMac), the wider use of solid-state drives (SSDs), and the disappearance of an integrated optical drive, not only in Apple's products but in those that rivals designed to run Windows.

Bajarin is convinced that the same will repeat with the MacBook as guide.

"It's much the same as the [original] Air was, a marvel. There was nothing like it," says Bajarin, implying that the MacBook fits that description, too.

And as with the Air, competing OEMs (original equipment manufacturers) will undoubtedly copy the MacBook to craft Windows-powered alternatives aimed at the same upper-range market. But not immediately. "If only from a motherboard engineering standpoint, Apple has at least a year's lead on rivals," says Bajarin.

Others see more similarities between the position of the MacBook Air in 2008 and the MacBook of seven years later.

"[The MacBook] is clearly a niche product," says Stephen Baker, analyst with the NPD Group.

That too was said of the MacBook Air when former CEO Steve Jobs pulled it out of a manila envelope at the Macworld Expo in 2008. Dismissed as underpowered and overpriced, the Air remained a minor player in Apple's laptop lineup for several years, arguably until at least 2010 when the company went exclusively to SSDs, shaved down the form factor and introduced a cheaper 11in model.

Further price cuts in 2014 accelerated the Air's prominence.

The experts also believe that the new MacBook will follow the same sales path as the Air, which was initially seen as a prestige product. "They're after the heart of the executive high-end status PC," says Ezra Gottheil of Technology Business Research.

To further that, Apple for the first time will offer colour choices: the traditional silver, a dark space grey and gold. Not coincidentally, those are the same hues as the iPhone and iPad. "Gold is going to be a big hit in China," Bajarin predicts.

But while these analysts are generally impressed with the MacBook, some are puzzled by its positioning in Apple's portfolio. "I'm struggling to understand why the MacBook Air is no longer the lightest [model], and why they felt they needed another line," says Baker.

Baker has a point. Until March, the 'Air' label had been used for Apple's lightest and thinnest notebooks (and iPad). The 'MacBook' nameplate, meanwhile, had been unused since 2011, when it was assigned to the most basic Apple laptop.

"The 'Air' name worked well for Apple. I would have liked to see them extending the name rather than fall back to the MacBook," says Baker.

Gottheil disagrees, saying that the lineup makes sense, including the retention of the 'Air' label. "They still want something at the price point of the Air," says Gottheil. "But they don't want to have a cheap 'MacBook'. Because it's one step up from the least expensive, they're segmenting their market and at the same time saying that thin and light rules."

Walk in the Rain

This month's winner is Janet Storer, with a shaded depiction of Brisbane during Cyclone Marcia.

Shooting during February's storm in Queensland, Storer managed to snap this black and white shot that captures the scene.

"During February, Cyclone Marcia, a category five storm, crossed the Queensland coast near Yeppoon. It then made its way down the coast as a tropical low dumping heavy rain on Brisbane where I live," says Storer.

"We were out driving and had stopped to look at our local creek, which had become a raging torrent. As we were heading home I saw this lonely figure braving the elements and quickly grabbed my iPhone to take this shot through the front windscreen."

After taking the photo with her iPhone 5s, Storer transferred the image to her iMac and applied a few more editing touches.

"I converted the image to black and white using the iPhone's basic editing and on my iMac computer used Photoshop to clone out some distracting rain drops and add a slight vignette blur to the foreground to add to the misty atmosphere."

Since retiring from her job as an ABC TV producer's assistant, Storer now spends part of her time taking photos around the globe.

"Photography has become my creative pastime, as has travelling to many parts of south-east Asia and Europe with my partner, Terry.

"My iPhone 5s is a perfect travelling companion, as it can be whipped out for a quick snap and is a terrific device for sharing photos or movies with family and friends from anywhere in the world."

While she is travelling Storer has a number of apps she enjoys using.

"I have a couple of editing apps on my phone. Snapseed is a favourite for playing around with textures and PS Express I use as well. But I tend to transfer my images to my iMac for greater flexibility with Photoshop and Nik software. For my library of images I use iPhoto and don't keep a huge library of photos on my phone in case it is stolen or lost!"

In iSnap, we're on the lookout for some of the best photographs being taken with iOS devices. Submit your favourites to macworld@macworld.com.au for your chance to be featured in the gallery below. Each month's winner will win a prize and appear on this page!

This month's prize is a Mount and a Flex from iStabilizer.

Secure your smartphone to virtually any surface with the iStabilizer Flex. Secure your iPhone to a car headrest, tree branch, pole, fence, tripod, desk, kitchen countertop or anything else you can think of. Just a tiny accessory to make a huge impact in how you use your smartphone, the iStabilizer Flex is a favourite accessory for iPhone users everywhere.

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04/2015 / 675

ENSURING YOUR SAFETY

APPLE FANS ENJOY A RELATIVELY CHARMED LIFE WHEN IT COMES TO SECURITY, BUT IT STILL PAYS TO PLAY IT SAFE. ADAM TURNER SHOWS YOU HOW.

When you're an Apple user it's easy to become blasé about security, but malware and other security threats aren't just for Windows and Android users to worry about. While hackers don't tend to focus on Apple, history shows that Macs and iGadgets are not impervious to attack. It's better to be safe than sorry.

There's no magic bullet when it comes to security. The best approach is to rely on layers of protection and ensure you keep up with the latest software patches. You'll want to take extra precautions if you're trying to keep children safe online. Finally, a healthy sense of paranoia is a great last line of defence against security threats that target human foibles rather than technical flaws.

ON YOUR MAC

You can break down security threats into two main categories – remote threats coming in over the internet and local threats from removable media or someone who actually gets their hands on your devices. If you're looking to guard against both on your Mac, then the best place to start is the Security & Privacy panel in System Preferences.

You should have set a password for your user account, but if you're concerned about uninvited guests trawling through your Mac, then it's best to disable automatic logins on the General tab, so you're required to enter your password when you boot up your computer. Also, set your screensaver to demand a password. Many security precautions require striking a balance between safety and convenience – to make life easier you might set it to only ask for a password if you've been away for more than a few minutes.

The System Preferences panels feature a padlock at the bottom left that lets you lock each panel to prevent changes unless you enter your password. It's a sensible security precaution to guard against accidental changes or deliberate tampering.

As an extra level of protection, FileVault encrypts your entire hard drive to make it virtually impossible for even the most skilled and determined intruders

Lock it down. FileVault is located in your Mac's System Preferences.

to access your files. Be warned, if you lose your password and recovery key, then you can't ever recover your data. If the thought of losing your precious files forever upsets you more than the thought of them falling into the wrong hands, then think twice about enabling FileVault. At the very least, make sure you have unencrypted backups of irreplaceable files such as family photos.

Rather than encrypt your entire hard drive, you may use Disk Utility to create an encrypted Disk Image for storing particularly sensitive files. Alternatively, you can create encrypted vaults using third-party software such as Knox, Concealer or Boxcryptor. Once again, forget the password and your files are lost forever, so proceed with care.

Mac OS's firewall is disabled by default, which is fine if you're at home behind a broadband modem/router with a built-in firewall. That, of course, assumes that you trust all the other computers on your home network. It's best to enable the firewall when you're away from home and can't vouch for the security of the network and the intentions of fellow users. Unfortunately, Macs don't adjust firewall settings automatically when you switch networks, so on MacBooks it's easier to enable the firewall and leave it on.

The built-in firewall only lets you configure incoming connections, there's no easy way to manage outbound connections in an effort to catch apps surreptitiously trying to phone home. If you want a highly configurable two-way firewall, then look to Little Snitch.

KEEP YOUR SECRETS

Secure websites that use HTTPS create an encrypted link directly from your browser to the website's server. This prevents other people who are using your network from eavesdropping on your traffic – including your internet service provider – but HTTP Secure doesn't protect all of your internet traffic.

If you're particularly concerned about security when you're away from home then use a Virtual Private Network (VPN). This creates a secure link from your Mac to a VPN server, encrypting all of your internet traffic to protect it from eavesdroppers in between. You'll find free VPN services, but the paid services tend to be faster and more reliable. Some VPN services offer Mac software, or else you can configure your Mac's built-in VPN software under the Network panel of the System Preferences.

The big security question for Mac users is whether or not you need to install third-party anti-virus software. Don't make the mistake of thinking there aren't viruses targeted at Macs; we've seen a few major threats in recent years.

OS X features basic built-in XProtect anti-virus, which runs in the background checking downloads for a handful of known threats. Click the Security & Privacy Advanced button and ensure that you've ticked 'Automatically update safe downloads list'. While you're at it, in Safari you should disable 'Open safe files after downloading' on the General preferences tab to give you a chance to reconsider after downloading a file.

Security threats can also come from bogus websites masquerading as trusted websites – such as your bank – in an effort to steal your passwords and other sensitive information. You're often directed to the website by a phishing scam email purporting to be from the bank. Your spam filter may pick it up as a scam, but, as a further line of defence, Safari may detect that it's a bogus website and block access.

Some Mac users consider that Apple's built-in security, combined with cautious web-surfing habits, offers enough protection. Others prefer the extra safety of third-party anti-virus software, which guards against a range of other threats.

Building on Apple's built-in security, some third-party anti-virus suites use advanced link scanning to check websites for malicious activity in real time, rather than relying on a list of bogus websites. They also scan for a wider range of viruses, to stop you from inadvertently passing on infected files to Windows users. Some employ heuristics to detect and block suspicious activity on your Mac, which may be evidence of a yet unidentified virus.

WATCH WHAT YOU INSTALL

Whether or not you're running third-party anti-virus software, there are sensible precautions you should take to reduce your risk of a security breach on your Mac. The first step is to keep your operating system and applications up-to-date, as updates often address security issues as well as adding new features. New versions of Mac OS like OS X 10.10 Yosemite often address security issues that can't easily be patched in their predecessors, so it's worth upgrading your older Macs to the latest version of Mac OS that they'll support.

As for non-Apple software, the safest option is to install from the Mac App Store where possible. By default Gatekeeper stops you installing software from other sources, but you can override this on the General tab of the Security & Privacy panel. When you're installing software from other sources, keep a close eye on the installation options to ensure that you're not inadvertently loading bloatware like browser toolbars that can hijack your search options.

Know it. The safest way to download software is via the App Store.

Always treat pop-up browser alerts with caution when they ask you to install new features and codecs or update plugins like Adobe Flash – especially if they pop up while you're visiting a shady website. Also avoid installing such updates when you're connected to a public network, including a café or hotel Wi-Fi hotspot. Even seemingly innocent sites can harbour security threats if the site, or the network you're using, has been compromised.

Java is no longer pre-installed on new Macs and it's best to leave it that way unless you really need it. If you do need to install Java for a specific application, you should still check that Java is disabled in your web browser. Under Safari's Security tab you'll see Enable JavaScript; you want to keep this ticked. Click on 'Manage website settings' and look for Java – from here you can control which plugins can work with which websites.

Java isn't the only plugin that presents a threat. Adobe's Flash is a common source of security flaws and you may find it safer to disable it by default – which may also help your Mac run more smoothly, as Flash can be a resource hog. Under 'Manage Website Settings' try changing Flash from Allow to Ask. Instead of automatically seeing the Flash content on web pages, you'll see a notification 'Flash blocked for this website' – click on the notification and you can choose to allow Flash to run.

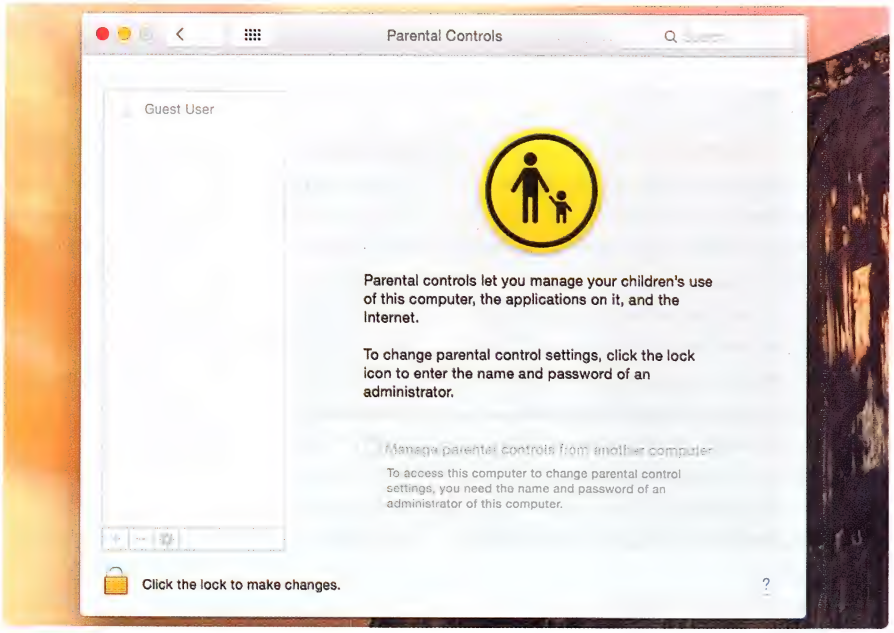
While you're at it, uninstall Adobe Reader if Apple's own built-in PDF reader meets your needs. Security flaws in Adobe Reader are another popular target for hackers.

PARENTAL CONTROLS

If children regularly use your Mac, then you should create a separate children's user account. While helping keep children safe online, this also stops them prying in your files, installing new software or inadvertently altering your settings.

Go to Users & Groups under System Preferences, click the plus icon to create a new user account and then select 'Manage with Parental Controls'. Give them a name and password, then click Create User. Now you can open the parental controls for that user and configure a range of settings, including limiting the apps they can use, websites they can visit, people they can contact and times of day they can use the computer. Alternatively, children can use the Guest account on your Mac, although all their information and files will be wiped when they log out.

You'll see a fast user switching drop-down menu on the Menu Bar, near the Spotlight icon, which makes it easy to switch between accounts without logging out. If you find this slows your computer down, though, try logging out of one user before you login as another.



Control. Create a new account for each child to help keep them safe online.

If you're looking for more protection against malicious and inappropriate online content, you might change the DNS settings in the children's user account to a service like OpenDNS Family Shield or Norton ConnectSafe. These free services let you block website categories rather than specific websites, although they both offer advanced paid services with more granular control.

One great aspect of these DNS-level filters is that they won't bog down your computer, unlike some desktop web filtering software. You can edit the DNS settings for individual wireless networks via the System Preferences Network panel, then lock the panel, but you can't set it to automatically apply those settings when you join a new network for the first time. It is possible that changing your DNS settings could impact on your unmetered content deals with services like iView, Netflix and Presto, so if in doubt check with your internet service provider.

ON YOUR iGADGETS

While you're upgrading your Mac's security it's a good idea to lock down a few features on your iPhone and iPad in case they fall into the wrong hands.

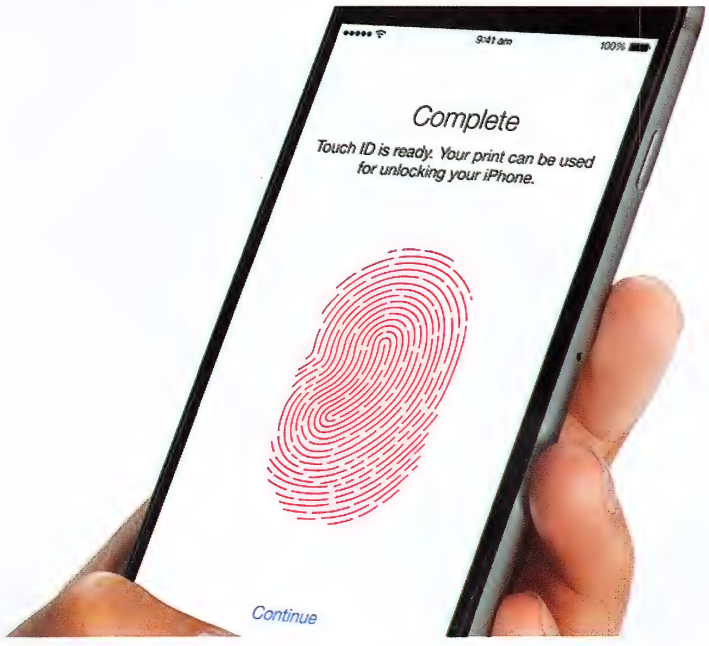
Secure your iGadgets with a passcode to keep them safe from prying eyes. Use the Touch ID and Passcode option under the Setting menu – if you're already using a code you'll need to punch it in before you can make any changes.

From this menu you can control what's visible on the lock screen, as well as switch from a simple four-digit passcode to something more complicated. You can also set a grace period during which you can unlock your device without the need to re-enter your code. Alternatively, you may configure the Touch ID fingerprint reader to act in place of a password in some circumstances.

While you're at it, you should dip into the General, Auto-Lock menu to automatically lock your device when it's idle. You should also explore the Restrictions menu to see if there are features you want to lock down temporarily or permanently, such as forcing the App Store to demand your password for every purchase rather than remembering it for 15 minutes. Don't use the same passcode for your lock screen and Restrictions, because your kids will eventually catch sight of your lock screen passcode over your shoulder.

The lack of user switching on iGadgets is very frustrating if you tend to let children play with your devices – it's one area where Apple really could learn from Google's Android. Restrictions is a half-baked workaround; for example, it can't limit access to your email. One workaround is to engage the General, Accessibility, Guided Access feature, which lets you use a triple tap on the button to temporarily lock the device to a single app.

While you're setting up your device, make sure you enable Find my iPhone, under the iCloud settings. This lets you track lost devices, lock the screen and even remotely wipe them (you can also enable similar features on your Mac). There's also an Activation Lock to stop someone else using your stolen phone.



Fingerprint. If you iOS device has Touch ID, intergrate it into your routine.

As with your Mac, take care when using your iGadget on public Wi-Fi networks. If you've got a generous mobile broadband allowance, there may be no need to jump on potentially insecure Wi-Fi networks. If you're particularly concerned about privacy and security, iOS has built-in VPN software.

The Restrictions menu is iOS's equivalent of parental controls. If you're looking for more protection against inappropriate online content, you may download a kid-friendly browser from the App Store. Alternatively, you could change the device's DNS settings. Go to the Wi-Fi menu, click on the information icon next to your home Wi-Fi network and manually change the DNS settings. Unfortunately there's no way to lock this down to stop someone changing them back. There's also no way to change the DNS settings for your 3G/4G mobile broadband connection.

ON YOUR NETWORK

You may be surprised how many internet-enabled devices are scattered around your home. It's important to keep them all up-to-date to address the latest security threats.

One of the biggest threats to your home security is an insecure Wi-Fi network. This lets your neighbours piggyback on your internet connection along with anyone parked in the street. Along with leeching your monthly bandwidth allowance, they could be snooping through your computers, listening in on your web traffic and even breaking the law online while leaving a trail of breadcrumbs that leads back to you.

It's important to use a strong Wi-Fi password – at least a dozen characters long with a mix of upper and lower-case letters, as well as numbers and symbols. Use WPA2 or WPA2 encryption; if your old wireless base station only offers WEP (Wired Equivalent Privacy) then it's time to upgrade. While you're at it, make sure you change the default password for the modem/router and any other networking gear.

Just like your Mac, it's important to regularly check for software updates for networking gear such as broadband modem/routers, wireless base stations, Network Attached Storage devices, network cameras, Wi-Fi extenders, network switches and smart home gear, such as smart light bulbs. Last year's Heartbleed encryption flaw and Shellshock BASH vulnerability were particularly nasty and required security updates for a wide range of internet-enabled devices.

Any device or feature exposed to the internet is a potential security risk, so disable non-essential services. Pay particular attention to your modem/router and NAS, which may share your files online as well as allow remote FTP

At the source. Make sure the Wi-Fi networks your devices connect to are secure as well.

Accounts - multi-company & currency, parent child, multi address, integrated google maps, CRM - **Payroll** - payrun, superannuation, superannuation adjustment, next of kin, company, department, class, multi-award, RDO, cost splitting by department, multiple bank accounts, leave loading, allowances, child support, leave loading, rebates, salary packaging, commission structures, salary sacrifice, workers compensations, unlimited super funds per employee, annual leave, long service leave, carer & personal leave, future leave, accumulators, employee log file, Statement of Leave, payrun log,service, loan, reversals, capital allowance schedule - **Job Projects** - resources, activities, time sheets, allocations, job project invoices, job project credit memos, details, cost, analysis, job project financials, planning and quoting, billing, GL budget, resource & project gantt charts, tracking notes - **Inventory** - manufacturing, bill of materials (BOM) , size/colour style matrix, unlimited barcodes per product, formula pricing, hire, lay by, multi-shop, batch and serial number tracking, inward goods, arrivals & deliveries, resources, price-book, multiple locations, multi-department, open to buy forecasting integrated emailing, document management, integrated soft phone. Sales reps, quotes, orders, invoices, requisitions, purchase orders and purchases, delivery run maintenance, dashboards, show reports, stocktake entry, transfer entry, build entry, unit demand, manifest, manager, asset purchase - **Management** - statement of position, months activities, cash & account movements, tax calculation, auditing tools, FX currency settings - **Assets** - passwords, password management, location management and company depreciation, serial number tracking, warrantee storage, insurance details, barcode, company and tax valuation, computer equipment details, disposal, purchase, revaluation, repair, service, loan, reversals, capital allowance schedule - **Utilities** - User access inquiry, system controls, master defaults, remote access defaults, co inquiry, department inquiry, task inquiry, organisation chart, work flow rules inquiry change menus and names. server administration, web server - **Workbook** - CRM, contacts, tracking notes - **System wide** - document management, CRM, word processor spreadsheet, wysiwyg report writers, SQL database, pack, query editor

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(File Transfer Protocol), SSH (Secure Shell), Telnet and WebDAV access. Familiarise yourself with the security settings on your networking gear, so you can configure these features correctly and disable whatever you don't need. You may find advanced security options, such as blocking access from IP addresses after a certain number of failed login attempts.

Don't think hackers won't find you; they use software that automatically scans the internet looking for vulnerable devices. They're particularly interested in network storage drives, because some are fully-fledged computers capable of running a wide range of applications. There are reports of hackers installing software to surreptitiously mine Bitcoin or even encrypting the contents of a NAS and demanding a ransom for your data's release.

If you do want to use remote access features, such as Apple's Back to My Mac, make sure you take the time to understand what you're doing. Some internet-enabled devices in your home can use UPnP (Universal Plug and Play) to automatically enable port forwarding on your modem/router. Port forwarding is not the kind of thing you should attempt manually if you don't know what you're doing, as you could leave the door open for hackers.

When it comes to keeping children safe online, you can also implement DNS-level filters via your broadband modem/router. This way they're automatically applied to every internet-enabled device in the house, unless you manually override the device-level DNS settings. Remember, your devices are only protected when they're on your home network, not once they switch onto mobile broadband from the phone network. Also, remember that no amount of technical safeguards are a substitute for parental supervision.

DON'T DROP YOUR GUARD

People are generally the weakest link in the security chain, so it pays to keep your wits about you when you're online.

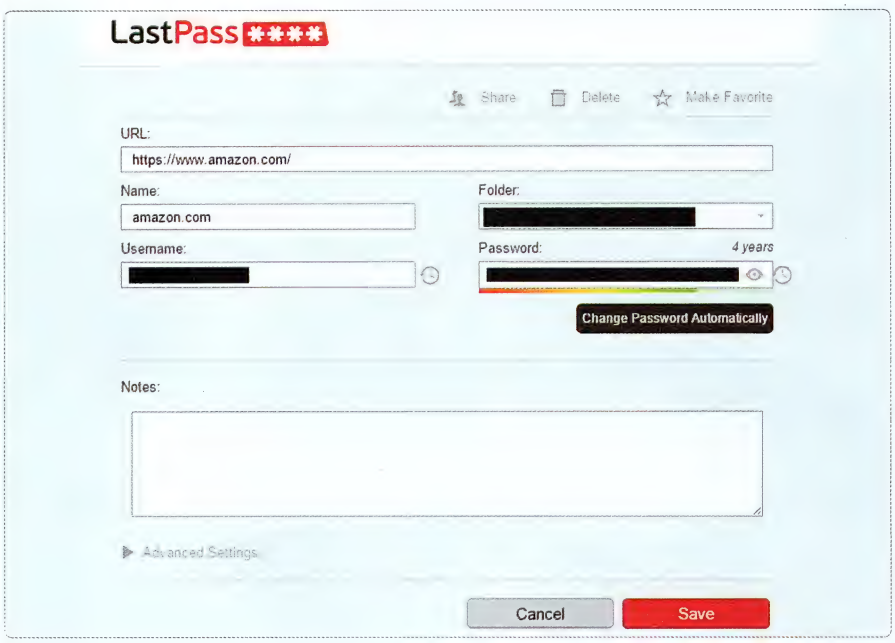
Using strong, unique passwords is essential. If you have trouble remembering strong passwords, use tricks such as starting with the first line of a lyric or rhyme. The first lines of 'Advance Australia Fair' may become AaLuR+FwAyAf+1788, easy for you to remember, but difficult for a person to guess or a computer to crack by brute force. For more passwords, look to the next line of the song.

If you still have trouble remembering passwords, Apple's iCloud Keychain can remember them for you. Alternatively, you may use a third-party password manager like LastPass or 1Password to safely keep track of all your secrets – only requiring you to remember a single master password.

A healthy scepticism when browsing the web and checking your email can also serve you well. No, you haven't won £15 million in the UK lottery, or inherited money from long-lost relatives. No, some shady foreign dignitary doesn't need your help to smuggle gold out of the country. Also watch out for online romances that gradually become demands for money to help sick relatives or deal with other emergencies.

Your spam filter and browser may pick up phishing scams, but as a general rule you should never trust an unexpected email from a service provider asking you to click a link or open an attachment. Scammers are known to masquerade as banks, courier companies, law enforcement and even the tax office in an effort to trick you into installing malware or giving away sensitive information. No matter what the security threat, stopping to think twice is often your best protection.

Security Code. Pick a four-digit security code to protect your iCloud keychain. iCloud will warn you if your code is too easy to guess, for example something like '5050'.



Automatic. Applications like LastPass (reviewed in April) can make password security safer and simpler.

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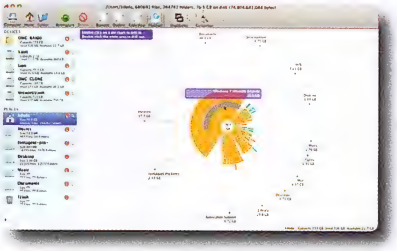
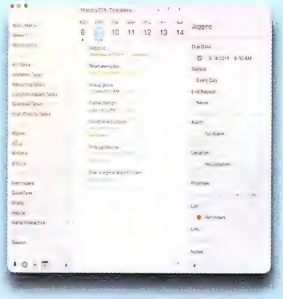
WhatSize will help you figure out the mystery of what's filling your drive and give you both advice and tools to trim the fat. WhatSize combines the functions of analysis and utility. Its analysis scans every file and folder on the disk and builds sortable, browsable and visual directories. Its utilities can suggest files to remove. It all starts by selecting a drive in the Devices list: WhatSize goes about its indexing business or loads a previously completed scan. The analysis part is divided into Browser, Outline, Table and PieChart. Browser and Outline correspond to the columns and views in the find. Table comprises every file and folder on a drive, and can be sorted and filtered. The PieChart view visualises how storage is divided up into folders and files.



GOODTASK 2
PRODUCTIVITY
Haha Interactive
$24.99

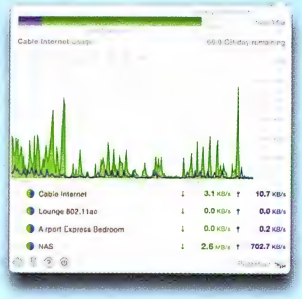


Haha Interactive's GoodTask 2 helps you keep track of all your activities, to-do items and reminders. The app, which the developers say has been rebuilt from the ground up, supports location-based actions, recurring tasks, natural language-based data input and a host of other great features that will help make getting your life organised a much easier job.

MEMO 2
UTILTIES
Activity
FREE

Like Stickies? Then you'll love Activity's Memo 2, which brings sticky notes to your desktop – with a twist. In addition to allowing you to type all kinds of text and plaster it over your desktop, the app supports encryption and password protection, making it easier to keep your sticky data away from sticky beaks.

PEAKHOUR
UTILITIES
Digitician
$12.99



If you find yourself at the end of the month staring at an unexpectedly large internet bill, you should take a look at Digitician's PeakHour, which tracks all your network usage in real time. The app also helps you figure out how to optimise your wireless access points and make sure your ISP is giving you the speeds you're paying for.

BOOKENDS
PRODUCTIVITY
Sonny Software
$74.99

If you've ever had to write a research paper, you know how painful it can be to manage citations and bibliographies – a problem Bookends hopes to solve. The app aids collecting and organising information from a variety of professional and scientific sources, online services and even your own collection of papers. Once loaded, the data can be searched using full-text queries at the click of a button.

IREAL PRO
MUSIC
Technimo
$24.99

iReal Pro pairs a song with its chord progressions in real time and follows along as its harmony develops to better understand how you can emulate your most cherished artists – or maybe even improve on their technique. As a bonus, hundreds of fan-made tablatures are available for import – free of charge – from Technimo's forums.

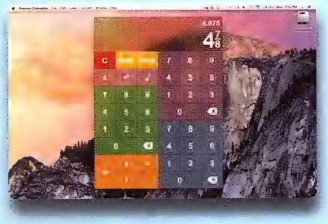
ANIME STUDIO DEBUT 10
GRAPHICS & DESIGN
Smith Micro Software
$49.99

Anime Studio Debut 10 is a complete animation package that lets you create and export your very own cartoons. Not only is this a great tool for having some fun and being creative, but it's also great for sprucing up your business presentations. The app can manage different characters and backgrounds, synchronise audio and video, and export your animation to several video formats.

DELUXE MOON HD
WEATHER
Sergey Vdovenko
$2.49

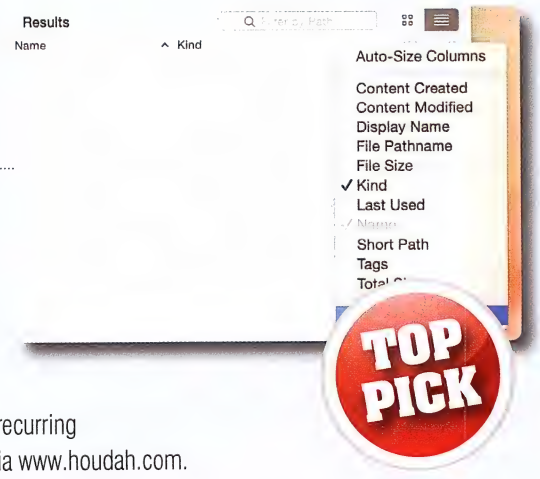
Deluxe Moon HD gives you a thorough look at Earth's satellite without having to look out the window – perfect for moon gazing in inclement weather. The app tracks the moon's phases and provides a complete lunar calendar that you can use to peek back at the moon's history and look ahead to see future phases. As a bonus, the app can be accessed from Yosemite's Today view.

FRACTION CALCULATOR
EDUCATION
PalaSoftware
$1.29



If fractions aren't your thing, you're in luck! Palasoftware's Fraction Calculator gives you a handy way to double-check your calculations right from your desktop. The app supports both negative and positive values, and makes quick work of converting numbers between fractions and decimals. Plus, its elegant interface looks right at home on Yosemite.

HOUDAHSPOT
UTILITIES
Houda Software
US$29



Houda Software's HoudaSpot may well be the answer to a question all computer users find themselves asking from time to time: 'Where did I put that file?' The app goes beyond Spotlight's capabilities to find files in every nook and cranny of your hard drive by name, content, author, pixel count and all kinds of other metadata. You can make your searches as complex as they need to be, and view your results with a convenient and easy-to-use interface that keeps all the important details at your fingertips. Users can customise columns in their search results, set up templates for recurring searches and access the Info pane to see a range of data on specific files. Available via www.houdah.com.

MACBOOK AIR VERSUS MACBOOK — A BUSINESS TRAVELLER'S PERSPECTIVE

BY ANTHONY CARUANA

The introduction of the new 12in MacBook has forged a new niche in Apple's notebook product line.

When Steve Jobs returned to Apple, he famously slashed the number of products the company was making. He drew a grid with four boxes, labelling one side with 'desktop' and 'laptop' and the other with 'consumer' and professional'. That led to the establishment of the MacBook and PowerBook product ranges, each focused on a particular type of customer.

The announcement of the MacBook is an interesting one. Apple has blurred the lines between consumers and pros largely because the core components such as processors, memory and storage are so commoditised. When you compare a MacBook Air with a MacBook Pro, other than the size of the devices, the two product line are functionally very similar.

That's not to say the two lines are identical in every way, but in terms of which device a developer, photographer, consultant, writer or video editor might choose, once they decide on the device's physical characteristics, such as weight and thickness, they can pretty much choose from either product line and know they have a computer that will suit their needs for at least two or three years.

The MacBook is a different kettle of fish. With a 12in display, it sits between the 11in MacBook Air and the 13in MacBook Pro and MacBook Air, but it's about 10 percent lighter than the smaller MacBook Air and more than 50 percent lighter than 13in MacBook Pro.

In an era of shrinking baggage allowances for carry-on that can be the difference between getting your bag into the plane with you or having to hastily repack or throw something out.

Storage and memory are good enough for most travellers. For $2200 you get 512GB of SSD storage and 8GB of system memory. That's the same as our current 13in MacBook Pro. While we've supplemented the storage with a 256GB SD card to accommodate our iTunes library, it's adequate for most applications.

Apple's main compromise with the MacBook has been on the processor. The Intel Core M processor family is specifically designed for mobile devices. As such, it is very power efficient, enabling the MacBook to have a run time of up to 10 hours of movie playback according to Apple. With judicious use, we could imagine getting through most of a long haul flight from Australia to the US west coast between trips to the charger.

For travellers, that better life may be worth the high cost of the MacBook compared to a similarly equipped MacBook Air

The downside – that new USB-C port is the only port, other than the headphone socket, the MacBook has. So, if you're planning to deliver a presentation you'll need an adapter, sold by Apple, to connect to projectors or displays VGA or HDMI. The same goes for the 27in Cinema Display you've been using in the office. For frequent travellers, we'd expect spending another $160 to buy two – one for the office and the external display and other that stays in your travel bag.

Our suspicion is Apple will rationalise the MacBook, MacBook Air and MacBook Pro product lines over the next year or so. We'll see a return to the 'Professional' and 'Consumer' product differentiation although I doubt we'll see it articulated in those words.

For travellers, the questions will be around what compromises you're prepared to make. If battery life is your killer feature and you're processor needs are modest, then the MacBook makes sense. But if you need more grunt and access to multiple USB ports and an SD card slot then the MacBook Air or MacBook Pro will make better sense.

WHAT IS USB-C IN THE NEW MACBOOK AND WHY SHOULD YOU CARE?

BY ANTHONY CARUANA

Apple's recent announcement of the relaunched MacBook product line has been met with mixed reactions. With a CPU that sits it in the niche between high-powered notebook and tablets, it's something of an 'inbetweener' – the sort of thing the late Steve Jobs said of devices like the iPhone 6 Plus.

Perhaps the most interesting innovation has been Apple's adoption of the new USB-C connector. This one connector can carry enough data and power to supply the needs of the modern notebook computer. But it's not all plain sailing.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF USB

USB has been around since 1990 when it was introduced via the myriad different connectors available in computers of the time. USB-A is the rectangular connector that we're most familiar with. Until now, the USB ports on all Macs have been USB-A ports.

USB-B is the port we usually see on devices like printers. It's the squarish connector.

We've also seen micro- and mini-USB connectors, but these are really variants of the USB-B connectors that have been shrunk down to suit mobile devices.

AND WE ARRIVE AT USB-C

USB-C boasts a number of advantages over its predecessors.

For a start, it doesn't have a right way up. You can plug a USB-C cable into a port without worrying about whether you have the cable the right way around.

While USB-A can carry power, it's limited. If you remember the introduction of the MacBook Air – Apple's external DVD drive required connection to a special USB-A port that delivered a little more power than the USB standard allowed. That power carriage is bi-directional so the USB-C port can be used to charge the new MacBook and to charge your iOS device when it's connected.

USB-C can carry far greater volumes of data than USB-A and USB-B. It's similar to Thunderbolt in its ability to move data for external peripherals such as printers and hard drives, but it can also handle video.

WHAT WILL IT MEAN?

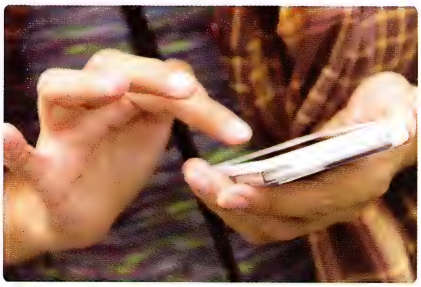
It sounds like good news doesn't it? One port type that can do everything. To some degree, it sounds like Nirvana for peripheral makers. One public standard that means no more fragmentation from having to make different products for the Apple and generic PC markets.

If you've forgotten to pack your Mac's charger, you'll be able to potentially borrow one from your Lenovo-toting friends.

We're not going to discuss how Apple has deployed USB-C just yet. Apple's shift to USB-C will mean some frustration for long-term Mac users. If you're like us, you probably have a box of cables, connectors and adapters that Apple has abandoned. This evolution means recent shifts such as MagSafe and Thunderbolt are about to be resigned to garage sales.

But the long-term benefit is, hopefully, Apple will stick to this industry-wide standard and stop using proprietary cables and connectors. Perhaps an upcoming version of the iPhone, iPad and iPod will use the mini-USB cable for sync and charge – following on from the standardisation adopted by every other smartphone and tablet maker.

The bad news is that until we refresh all of our peripheral devices or move to everything being wireless, we'll need to invest in dongles and adapters in order to use USB-C.



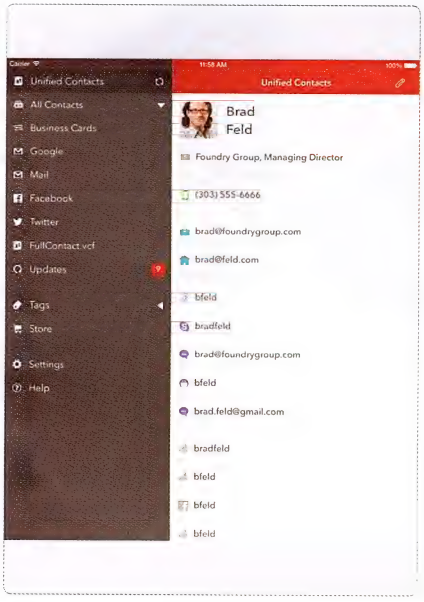
TWO CONTACT MANAGER APPS BETTER THAN THE ONE THAT CAME WITH YOUR PHONE

BY LIANE CASSAVOY

I've said it before, and I'll say it again: your smartphone's contacts app isn't the best contact manager around. A wide variety of third-party apps is available, making it easier than ever to keep track of all those names and numbers. And just like your list of contacts, these apps are constantly being updated – some of them much improved since last time I looked at them.

FULLCONTACT

FullContact doesn't look like the Cobook Contacts app I tried out last winter, nor does it act much like it. So I was very surprised to find out that it is, technically, the evolution of that app.



FullContact previously was a web-based contact manager. The company behind that product acquired Cobook and worked that app's mobile functionality into FullContact's feature set. The result is a well-designed mobile app with the power of a desktop client.

You can sign up for FullContact on your iPhone, iPad or on the web. (An Android version is in the works.) Once you're logged in, you can add contacts from Facebook, Google, iOS (including iCloud) and Twitter. FullContact pulls all of those contacts together, adding social media profile pictures (which, alone, makes the app so much more visually appealing that the stock iOS app), and cleaning and de-duping your contact list.

FullContact does this automatically, which may be concerning to some users. I was hesitant to hand over control, but I found the app surprisingly effective at cleaning up my contact lists. I still had a couple of duplicate contacts left, but I liked that it didn't automatically merge contacts when it wasn't sure.

FullContact also syncs your contacts across your devices. It includes a social feed option, so you can see your contacts' recent posts, and a contact history, so you can see the last times you were in touch. All of these are very useful when you're about to reach out to a professional contact.

FullContact is available for free, in a Basic version that allows you to store up to 5000 contacts, a two-way sync with Google every 24 hours, and 10 free Business Card Transcriptions (this is when you take a picture of a business card, and FullContact has a real person transcribe that card and send it back to your phone as a contact). The $12.99-per-month Premium version allows up to 25,000 contacts, real-time syncing with Google, and 50 Business Card Transcriptions per month. Both versions allow you to purchase extra transcriptions as needed.

PURECONTACT

PureContact is very different from any other contact manager I've tested. Depending on how you intend to use it, that could be a very good or a very bad thing.

PureContact values quality over quantity and, because of that, it's best thought of as a favourites app, not a full-fledged contact manager. If you're going to be using it to stay in touch with a select group of people, it's incredibly handy. But if you're looking for an app to manage hundreds of contacts, this is not the one for you.

That's because you have to add all of your contacts manually. Unlike most contact managers, PureContact doesn't scour your various address books and services for people with whom you've been in touch. Instead, it accesses your phone's (Android or iOS) address book and lets you select who you'd like to add.

All of the contacts you choose are given their own circle, which you can tap or swipe to access or take action. PureContact lets you assign actions to behaviours, such as a right, left, up or down swipe, or a double tap. You can have the app email your contacts on a right swipe, but call them when you double tap. I love how you can personalise these actions in a way that makes sense for you.

I also like PureContact's simple, sophisticated design. It's clutter-free and easy to use. At $1.29, it's also very affordable. Still, that price tag may be hard to justify when the app is simply serving as a souped-up version of the 'favourites' function your phone likely already offers.

FOUR GMAIL MOBILE APP TRICKS FOR iOS AND ANDROID

BY BEN PATTERSON

There's more to the recently revamped Gmail app than a pretty Material Design. Read on for four new Gmail tricks, starting with...

SET A VACATION RESPONDER

You can set a vacation reminder directly from the Gmail app, perfect for letting friends, loved ones and co-workers know that you won't be replying for a good long while.

For iOS: Tap the menu button in the top-left corner of the page, then tap the Settings button (the one shaped like a gear) next to your email address.

Flip the Vacation Responder switch, then fill in the blanks – you know, start and end dates, subject line, message and so on. Tap the Save button.

Bonus tip: Any vacation message you set in the web version of Gmail will automatically sync with the Vacation Responder settings for the Gmail app, and vice versa.

For Android: Tap the menu button in the top-left corner of the screen, scroll down and tap Settings, then tap the Gmail account for which you'd like to set an out-of-office message.

Tap Vacation Responder, then fill in the start and end dates, a subject line and the body of your message. Checking the box next to 'Send only to my contacts' will ensure that only people you know will get the message.

Flip the 'Vacation Responder' switch on, then tap Done.

SHUSH AN ANNOYING EMAIL THREAD

Gmail makes it easy to 'mute' an annoying message thread – like the kind where everyone chimes in with a "congrats!" or "so cute!" or "see you there"... over and over again. Once muted, the thread won't appear in your inbox again unless you're the only person in the To field.

For iOS/Android: See a message thread you'd like to mute? Open it, tap the three-dot (for Android) or down-arrow (for iOS) menu in the top corner of the screen, then tap Mute.

Want to unmute a message? Search for 'is:muted', open the muted message you'd like to unmute, then move it back to the inbox. That'll clear the thread's Muted label.

SWIPE BETWEEN MESSAGE THREADS

Here's a handy little Gmail feature that's easy to miss. Want to read the next message thread in your inbox? No need to tap the Back button to return to the inbox screen. Instead, just swipe from right to left (for older threads) or left to right (for more recent threads).

ATTACH BIG GOOGLE DRIVE FILES TO YOUR MESSAGES

With a little help from Google Drive, you can send a massive file – as in, say, more than a few GB – to a friend via email, or deliver a large batch of files.

Don't have a Google Drive account? Well, if you're using Gmail, you've actually got one already.

First, you'll need to load the files you want to send into Google Drive. Open your Google Drive account, then drag the file you want to send onto the web page. The file should begin uploading automatically.

Next, open the Gmail app, compose a new message or reply to an existing one, tap the Attach button (it looks like a paperclip), then tap Insert from Drive.

Find the file you want to send, tap it, then tap the Select button (for Android) or the curved arrow (on iOS).

COMPNOW FIRST TO ROLL OUT APPLE'S DEVICE ENROLMENT PROGRAM

BY TANIA CAO

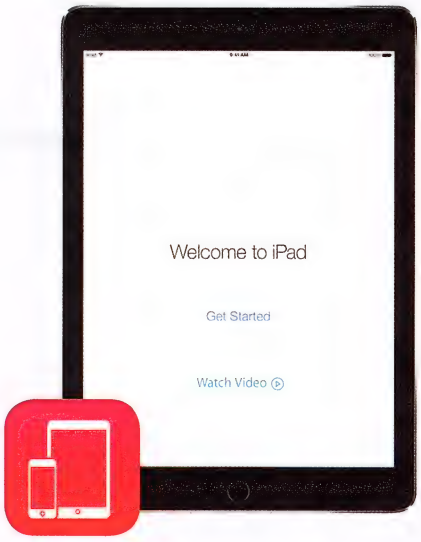
Apple's Device Enrolment Program (DEP) is now officially available in Australia at CompNow. The family-run organisation has become the first IT provider to offer businesses and education institutions the program, which easily deploys and configures iOS and OS X devices.

DEP, which is apart of the Apple Deployment Program (ADP) "provides a fast, streamlined way to deploy organisation-owned iPad and iPhone devices and Mac computers purchased directly from Apple, or from participating Apple Authorised Resellers or carriers", explains Apple.

CompNow, the first Authorised Apple Reseller in Australia explains, "Through combining your Device Management Software (MDM), your Volume Purchasing (VPP), and purchasing your hardware directly through CompNow, you can now enjoy true zero-touch configuration of your devices – both iOS and OS X."

VPP allows organisations a simple solution in purchasing, downloading and installing apps and books from the App Store and iBooks Store. Through the ability to purchase iOS and OS X apps and books in volume, devices can be easily distributed with the same apps or books to employees, contractors, teachers or students.

There are two VPP websites – one for business and one for education. The VPP for Business allows you to get custom built apps for iOS. Custom built apps are created by third-party developers to fit your acquired needs, and can be downloaded privately through the VPP store. The VPP for Education lets app developers offer special pricing for app purchases of 20 or more for eligible institutions; however, special prices for books are not available.



The zero-touch configuration for IT will mean that large-scale deployment of iPads and Macs are "seamless" says Apple. Devices will be configured according to the requirements placed by organisations, with assurance that all devices will receive the same configuration.

APPLE'S NEW MACBOOK PRO AND AIR MODELS DON'T SUPPORT WINDOWS 7 IN BOOT CAMP

BY IAN PAUL

Microsoft is pretty much done with Windows 7 and, now, so is Apple. The new 13in MacBook Air and MacBook Pro laptops introduced in March will not run Windows 7 via Apple's dual-boot assistant, Boot Camp. According to Apple's support documentation, Boot Camp only supports Windows 8 and 8.1 on the new devices; however, official Windows 10 support will likely roll out later in 2015.

This is the second time Apple has decided to give Windows 7 the cold shoulder. The late 2013 Mac Pro also ceased to support Windows 7 in Boot Camp, but other Macs released in 2014 did support Microsoft's operating system.

Apple hasn't officially said if the lack of Windows 7 support for Boot Camp is the new normal going forward, but it seems likely. In January, Microsoft ended mainstream support for Windows 7, meaning the OS will only receive security updates for the next five years, and retail disc sales for Windows 7 ended in late 2013. With Microsoft winding down its own support of Windows 7, now is the ideal time for Apple to say goodbye to it as well.

NOT THE END

Anyone who has Windows 7 discs kicking around will still be able to use the OS on the newer MacBooks – just not with Apple's software. Third-party virtualisation options such as Parallels Desktop or VMWare Fusion still support Windows 7 installs. If you need a free option there's also VirtualBox, though Parallels or VMWare Fusion tend to offer better performance.

The lack of Windows 7 support with Boot Camp may annoy people who need it for work, but with the virtualisation options around it shouldn't be a deal breaker.

If Windows 7 support is absolutely critical, however, and you want to use Boot Camp, there are still a number of Macs on the market that will support it. Check out Apple's support pages (support.apple.com/en-au/HT204048) for a complete list.

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The home for business-minded Apple users on macworld.com.au

While many Mac, iPhone and iPad owners use their devices for purely personal pursuits, there are those who document, record and share as part of the their day to day work. What are the most efficient and effective hardware and software options for your needs? How can you start using it immediately to drive sales, connect with colleagues, create powerful presentations, reduce communication charges?

We examine the latest technology for enterprise users to help you make the best use of your time and resources for your business.

Jonathan Stewart - Editor of *Macworld Australia*
We started this section as we appreciate that technology is a critical foundation for the success of your business.

macworld.com.au

Why the new MacBook's single port is all you really need

Apple's revelation of a single-port MacBook had been leaked months ahead of time. Still, many were in denial and remain so. From their perspective, which you can read in comments on articles, a single port is a nonstarter.

They point to the many uses of a port besides charging its battery: to charge and sync iOS and other devices; for tethering a phone or tablet to use its cellular connection; to connect to monitors, printers and scanners; and more esoteric uses, like target disk mode, in which a laptop can be mounted as a disk on another Mac.

In fact, that's how I use my laptop! But here's the thing: when you use technology versus write about it, you're a pundit for yourself. Unless you make a special effort, your use case seems like the preferred one – you see it every day, it makes sense to you, and everyone else appears to be an outlier.

As a tech writer, though, I try to break through the barrier of my own choices, and make sure I understand how everyone works. It's often difficult to know whether I've found a pocket or people or a widespread trend, but I rely on where companies invest their money in new products, reported and estimated sales figures, and how third-party ecosystems grow or fail.

What shakes out with the new MacBook is the difference between what I'd call a nomadic desktop user, who is an often reluctant mobile road warrior; and the mobile-first or mobile-only user, for whom a computer is like a bigger, different smartphone or tablet, and their usage pattern mirrors that.

NOMADIC DESKTOP ROAMER

Creating makeshift shelters of desks and electronics wherever they roam, the nomadic desktop user expects to have and needs external devices to carry out her work. This includes an external monitor (or maybe two), at least one external drive and one hopes a gigabit Ethernet connection.

As one of this herd, I sympathise. I've always treated a laptop as an accessory to my main machine, which was a desktop computer, whether all-in-one, a Cube or a tower. I resisted an Air for years, and bought a 15in MacBook Pro a few years back. But I sold it months later when I realised it was just too hurking for my needs. A mid-2011 MacBook Air has been my stalwart companion since.

More recently, set up in a co-working space, my focus shifted so that my laptop became my main computer and Mac mini my adjunct machine, used occasionally.

But I'm still tethered to the trappings of desktop life. At my co-working space, I've left a DisplayPort-equipped Asus monitor, a USB 100Mbps Ethernet adapter, a charger, a keyboard and a mouse. Also, the kitchen sink.

For we breed of nomads, a MacBook could be a hard sell unless and until clever docks are introduced. These are expected. A single dock, likely requiring external power, could handle DisplayPort output and a USB 2.0/3.0 hub, as well as pass-through power. So far, USB-C network adapters haven't been discussed by Apple or others, but it should be possible, and that would be a must-have dock item as well.

Even with a dock, we're going to feel less capable with a single port or with USB-C as our only wired interface. We don't want to carry piles of adapters or a dock – the worst thing we have to do is pack separate mini-DisplayPort-to-DVI and -VGA dongles if we're expecting to give presentations on the road.

I'm likely an outlier in that category by owning a MacBook Air over a MacBook Pro. While I run Adobe InDesign, Lightroom and Photoshop regularly on my MBA, it's a stretch and often involves tedious delays that I wouldn't encounter with an MBP. Still, I prefer the flexibility.

For my confreres, though, you're more likely regularly plugging in external hard drives, and if you're lucky enough to already be working at Thunderbolt 2 speeds, even a dock doesn't help, as you'd be knocked down to 5 Gbps with the new MacBook at best.

MOBILE LAPTOPIAN

The sweet spot of the MacBook is aimed squarely at the person who lives on a laptop and rarely, if ever, has need of its ports except for charging. They often find themselves unable to plug in, and they need battery life long enough to let them not worry about that.

When you look at sales figures of wired peripherals, where they are stocked, and what kind, it's clear that wireless has won the day wherever it's possible – as with printers and networking – and that a relatively small number of users combine laptops with the regular use of external storage and other devices that benefit from the highest of high-speed performance.

What those users look for is the time between charges, not the capabilities when tethered. Apple describes the lightweight, 12in MacBook as having nine hours of wireless web, the same as the heavier, 11in MacBook Air, and both get an hour more when just playing video. Apple shrinking the logic board and pumping in more battery in empty spaces certainly had an effect. (Apple estimates 12 hours of routine use for the 13in MBA.)

The iPad Air 2 weighs half as much but gets 10 hours for any mix of surfing, streaming and viewing. It's clear Apple sees the range of nine to 10 hours as ideal to go without a charge.

But do these folks never plug anything in to a laptop, except an iOS device to charge it? David Brennan responded to a query about 'no port' users, by noting that he uses a Mac mini for more intensive tasks, but carries around a MacBook Air of my vintage for everything else. "I could live quite happily with no ports," he writes, and a MacBook is on his list for when his current MBA battery is past its prime.

Chris Brennan, a colleague from across the world in the UK, notes that in his personal use he's gradually become almost entirely untethered already. Even when he's at work, "My printer is wireless, as are the keyboard and mouse in the office." Between ubiquitous Wi-Fi, wireless peripherals, cloud storage and the long battery life of a MBP, he can see living off one dual-purpose port.

And another responder noted similarly that all the purposes to which he used to need a USB port, such as a flash drive, he now relies on Dropbox and other cloud services. He writes, "I'd bet that there's a middle ground between people who've worn the gold off their USB contacts and me, who think they use the ports most months, but actually only use it once or twice a year, and would cope just fine if it wasn't there."

Add to this picture the fact that USB-C will allow bidirectional charging: you'll be able to get third-party batteries inexpensively with multiple ports that can be both power source and hubs. This will make the rarely pluggers even more able to live away from the grid.

PAINTING A RAINBOW

The new MacBook is polarising, because it reveals some of our fears about the direction Apple seems to be taking. I mean, by all that's holy, they took our floppy drive! Our optical drive! Our FireWire! What… will they take next?!

Veteran Mac users feel this most of all, because events of the last 15 years have whipsawed us with changes every two or three. For the right user, the one-port MacBook is a fine compromise, even if there could have been two. For the wrong user, Apple still has a whole line-up of other computers, many aimed at us nomads.

Casetify Customised Apple Watch Band

This company lets you create your own customisable Apple Watch Band by connecting to Instagram or Facebook, picking your favourite picture and using it to fill in the details on your band. Not into DIY? You can pick from Casetify's 'Launch Collection' lineup of four different Apple Watch bands for US$50 apiece.

Casetify / US$50 + shipping
http://www.casetify.com

GEAR GIZMOS GOODIES

GADGETGUIDE

Kensington KeyFolio Thin X2 Plus

If you like to ditch your MacBook when you travel and just bring along your iPad, the KeyFolio Thin X2 Plus makes a useful companion – it includes an integrated Bluetooth keyboard with backlit keys. Available in black or white, the case doubles as stand in landscape orientation, powers off the keyboard automatically whenever disengaged from the magnetic stand, and is compatible with the iPad Air's magnetic sleep/wake feature.

Kensington
$119.95
www.kensington.com/au

EnerPlex Surfr

The Surfr for iPhone 6 features a 2700mAh battery that can be charged by either a conventional wall outlet or by the integrated solar panel on the back of the case. The case's battery will give you another battery cycle and is recharged by via a micro-USB port. It's available in black, orange or blue and the only thing you have to fear is a cloudy day.

EnerPlex
US$99.99 + shipping
www.goenerplex.com

Knomo Knomad Air

The Knomad Air is a portable organiser with plenty of room for your iPad, iPhone and all of their accessories. The organiser features elastic straps that hold your charger and cables in place, dedicated pockets for documents and devices, and a stylus holder. The Knomad Air comes in black, blue or brown, and includes a unique ID tag that helps retrieve a lost device.

Knomo
US$69 + shipping
www.knomobags.com

TurtleCell for iPhone 5/5s

The TurtleCell features built-in retractable headphones that are always on hand whenever you want to listen to music or take a phone call. The case sports an in-line microphone, as well as an audio switch for turning the headphone feature off and on; it comes in black, red, aqua blue or platinum grey.

TurtleCell
US$39.95
www.turtlecell.com

Unitek USB OTG hub with KM Swap & File Transfer

This device from Unitek connects Mac, PC and Android devices and allows you to control both devices with the same set of keyboard and mouse. To drag files to another desktop, plug into the ports and you'll be able to work across two platforms. The port includes three USB 3.0 ports and data transfer rate of up to 5 Gbps.

Anyware
$39.95
www.anyware.com.au

Griffin Technology WatchStand

The Griffin Technology WatchStand holds your Apple Watch at an easy-to-view angle while it charges. The WatchStand accommodates both flexible and semi-flexible Apple Watch bands and its internal core slides out so users can safely keep their charging cable out of the way. The stand's moulded base allows you to prop up and easily view your iPhone, as well.

Griffin Technology
US$29.99 + shipping
www.griffintechnology.com

Twelve South HiRise for Apple Watch

The HiRise for Apple Watch aims to both showcase your new wearable and charge it overnight. The stand ships in silver or black, with a brushed metal finish and its non-slip rubber base will keep it from sliding. The Apple Watch charging cable slips into the back of the stand, but can be popped out if needed for travel.

Twelve South / $49.99
www.twelvesouth.com

APP GUIDE Cool software for the iPad, iPhone & iPod touch.

ADOBE COMP CC

PRODUCTIVITY
Adobe
iPAD FREE

Instead of being chained to the desktop while roughing out an initial draft, designers can now create more freely from nearly anywhere using only an iPad, safe in the knowledge that the work they've done so far will actually be part of the final project. Comp CC enables designers to dummy up designs using stock placeholders for image frames, text, lines and shapes. The app comes equipped with vectors for basic shapes, while other assets (such as those created with Adobe Shape CC) can be placed directly from a Creative Cloud Library, camera or iPad photo library. It may not be a full-featured solution, but there's more than enough here to knock out quick comps for clients or even attractive first drafts for mobile, web or print work.

PLANET QUEST

GAMES
OutOfTheBit
iPHONE & iPAD FREE

Planet Quest is a charming new rhythm affair that finds you abducting humans from a hovering UFO. As the planet spins, you'll tap in time with the current track to suck them up into your ship, and when one song ends, another immediately begins. It's a game you can play in an instant, but one you'll want to keep plugging away at.

LAYOUT FROM INSTAGRAM

PHOTO & VIDEO
Instagram
iPHONE FREE

Layout makes a persuasive case for Instagram collages. If you don't want to spam your followers with a series of similar images, even though each one is slightly different enough to warrant its own post and caption, Layout lets you sum up an experience in one perfectly curated photo, which is exactly what Instagram is all about.

PERISCOPE

SOCIAL NETWORKING
Twitter
iPHONE FREE

Periscope is a live video streaming app that allows Twitter users to communicate via a live video with as many people as they like and also alert their followers that it has begun. When the video is finished, users can make it available for reply for 24 hours. Broadcasters can converse with viewers with an in-built messenger and receive 'hearts' depending on how well liked the video is.

MR JUMP

GAMES
1Button SARL
iPHONE & iPAD FREE

Mr Jump is a minimalist one-touch platformer game by 1Button. Expect to jump a great deal and then die. Each of the 12 levels features pits, pixel-wide platforms to land on and other obstacles, and each level introduces a new game mechanic or obstacle to watch out for, too. This free game is already shooting up the App Store charts and with good reason.

ANGRY BIRDS STELLA POP!

GAMES
Rovio Entertainment
iPHONE & iPAD FREE

This bubble-popping affair is built in the mould of arcade classic *Bust-a-Move* (aka *Puzzle Bobble*), but really it's a near-identical copy of *Bubble Witch 2 Saga* – from the interface to the power-ups, map screen and more. *Angry Birds Stella Pop!* remains an enjoyable freemium game, besting its rival on production values while delivering amusing gameplay – but also difficulty spikes and arbitrary waiting periods.

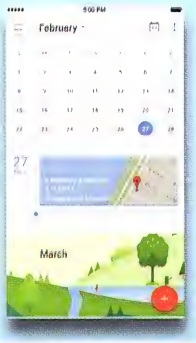
ATARI FIT

HEALTH & FITNESS
Atari
iPHONE FREE

Need a little incentive to get off your bottom? The free Atari Fit app for iPhone offers more than 100 exercises, so you'll have a useful guide to getting in shape – and if you actually do the exercises, you can earn 'coins' that unlock classic games like *Pong*, *Super Breakout* and *Centipede*.

GOOGLE CALENDAR

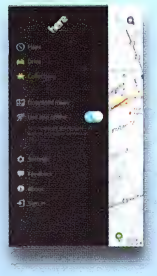
PRODUCTIVITY
Google
iPHONE FREE



Google Calendar has finally arrived as its own app on iOS – sparing Google-loving iPhone users the hassle of syncing disparate calendars across platforms. The new app includes a schedule view, the ability to schedule events directly from Gmail, view single or multiple days and 'smart suggestions' to help you quickly fill out your event details.

HERE

NAVIGATION
Nokia Apps
iPHONE FREE



Nokia's free Here app for iPhone is trying to position itself as an alternative both to Apple's native iOS map and to the ever-so-popular Google Maps. This app encourages you to download maps to your phone for offline use; its features include voice-guided turn-by-turn navigation, maps for more than 100 countries, real-time traffic information in more than 40 countries and public transit directions for more than 900 cities.

OMNIOUTLINER

PRODUCTIVITY
The Omni Group
iPHONE & iPAD $37.99

A good outline is an evolving idea. It's a workshop for hammering out the greater shape of something – a paper, presentation, business plan, book, screenplay – by adding, discarding and rearranging information. This is where OmniOutliner performs. Version 2.3 for iOS brings iPhone support and settings specific to using an external keyboard with the app: using the Tab key to navigate between cells, showing keyboard shortcuts in inspectors, and typing Command-V to paste text styled or plain. The app can import text shortcuts from TextExpander if it's installed and additional templates from OmniOutliner 4 for Mac are available. For collaborators, OmniOutliner takes full advantage of Omni Sync Server, a free service that could be the model of cloud syncing – updates appear on iPhone, iPad and Mac devices within seconds, even when the document is open on all three.

FAQ: EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE APPLE WATCH

BY CAITLIN MCGARRY AND SUSIE OCHS

Apple Watch debuted in 2014, which was plenty of time to think up all kinds of questions that company didn't answer the first time around. How long does the battery last? How will Apple Pay work? How much do the things even cost?

Now that Apple has launched the Apple Watch, what do you need to know? Find out here.

SO, APPLE IS FINALLY MAKING A SMARTWATCH, HUH?

Yes it is – several, actually. The Apple Watch has three editions, varying in materials and luxury: the Apple Watch, Apple Watch Sport and Apple Watch Edition.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THOSE THREE?

Apple Watch is made of stainless steel, in a shiny chrome or a space black finish. Its touchscreen is covered by sapphire crystal, which should make it more scratch-resistant than the Gorilla Glass Apple has used on its iPhones. Prices range between $799 and $1629, depending on whether you buy the 38mm or 42mm case and which band you choose.

Apple Watch Sport has an anodised aluminium case (which is lighter than stainless steel) in silver or space grey, and the face is Ion-X glass, which is also designed to be hard and rugged (as well as a little bit lighter) than the sapphire. It's definitely the lightest of the three Apple Watch editions, making it an ideal exercise companion. It's also the cheapest option at $499 for the 38mm version and $579 for the 42mm model.

As for the Apple Watch Edition, it ramps up the luxury factor with an 18-carat gold casing in yellow or rose. As you may expect, it's heavy. Gold, y'know. The Apple Watch Edition also comes in a fancy leather box that doubles as a charging cradle! It costs about as much as an entry-level car, ranging from $14,000 to $24,000, depending on size and band choice.

ARE THERE MULTIPLE MODELS BECAUSE ONE SIZE DOESN'T ACTUALLY FIT ALL?

Yes, each edition comes in two sizes, which is something we haven't seen with any Android Wear watches so far. You'll be able to get the Apple Watches in heights of 38 and 42 millimetres – about 1.5 and 1.65 inches, respectively, if you've had it up to here with the metric system. The Watch's promotional videos feature plenty of women wearing the watch, which is especially nice to see, since other smartwatch makers appear to be ignoring those of us with slender wrists.

CAN YOU SWAP OUT THE WATCH BAND?

Absolutely. Apple announced six bands, and it seems like it'll be easy to mix and match any band with any watch, swapping them out as your heart desires without the aid of any tools – as long as the band and watch are the same size. (The Leather Loop band, for example, only fits 42mm watches, not the smaller 38mm size.) Apple says it's come up with its own proprietary system to make switching bands easy – but that also means you probably won't be able to swap in just any band. And even if Apple's bands fit your watch, the finish might be different. The solid-gold hardware accents on the rose grey Modern Buckle band won't match the anodised aluminium finish of the Apple Watch Sport, for example.

For working out, the sweat resistant elastomer Sport Band comes in black,

white, pink, blue and lime green. The Sport Band comes as the default on the Apple Watch Sport, naturally. Weirdly, different colours of the Sport Band have different weights, with black being the lightest.

Owners of the Apple Watch and Watch Edition get three leather straps and two metal straps to choose from. The Leather Loop is designed to be soft and comfortable, with a highly adjustable hidden magnetic closure – you just wrap it around your wrist and the strap sticks to itself to stay closed. That one comes in stone, light brown and bright blue. Available in pink, brown and midnight blue, the Leather Modern strap has a two-piece magnetic closure and a subtle texture. And the old-school Classic Buckle strap is a black leather strap that closes with a stainless steel buckle just like the traditional watches you've seen your whole life.

Crafted from stainless steel, the Link Bracelet band closes with a butterfly clasp. Apple has included a link-release button on several of the links, so you can remove links yourself to customise the fit – instead of having to take it to a jeweller or watch repair shop. That one comes in a regular stainless steel tone or in space black. With myriad tiny, interlocking loops, the Milanese Loop band resembles chain mail, only much more modern. The stainless steel mesh is also magnetic, so you can adjust it to more sizes than you could the Link Bracelet.

WHICH PHONES DOES IT WORK WITH?

Good news: you do need an iPhone to pair with your Apple Watch, but it doesn't have to be the brand new iPhone 6 or iPhone 6 Plus. An iPhone 5, 5s or 5c will work just fine. That's a big deal since the watch's $499 starting price may be harder to justify if it also required the purchase of a shiny new phone.

CAN LEFT-HANDED USERS WEAR IT?

Don't worry, southpaws, Apple hasn't forsaken you. The Apple Watch works well for lefties, because the display rotates. All you have to do is flip the watch over so the Digital Crown is on the left side. Then swap out the band so it's also in the right position, and then strap the watch to your right wrist. Easy, right?

WHAT KINDS OF SENSORS DOES THE APPLE WATCH HAVE? CAN IT TRACK MY HEART RATE?

Apple says that the watch has a couple different sensors, including a gryroscope and an accelerometer (as you'll find in most smartphones), plus a 'custom' sensor that uses visible-light and infrared LEDs along with photodiodes, all on the back of the device, to determine your heart rate. The Apple Watch can also talk to your iPhone's GPS and Wi-Fi to help with figuring out location and other information.

SO IT'S A WATCH AND A FITNESS TRACKER?

The accelerometer lets the watch count your steps, and it extrapolates distance on its own, or relies on the GPS in the paired iPhone to trace your exact route. That step data comes in handy for two of the apps Apple has included on the watch: Activity and Workout. Activity shows your progress toward daily goals for moving, exercising and even standing. Workout is for more detailed tracking of a variety of activities, including distance, pace, time and calories burned during each session; you can also use that app to set workout goals, and the watch will give you feedback as you reach those goals. Both of the watch's fitness apps sync data back to the Health and Fitness apps on your iPhone, too. You can't use third-party fitness apps like Runtastic or Nike+ Running without your iPhone in tow, though.

HOW DO YOU NAVIGATE THE APPLE WATCH? IT'S GOT A TOUCHSCREEN, RIGHT?

It does have a touchscreen, but the Apple Watch's big innovation is the little dial that sticks out the side, also known as the Digital Crown. That's a high-tech version of the crown you'll find on standard wristwatches, which you turn to set the time or wind the watch. In the case of the Apple Watch, however, the Digital Crown acts more like the iPod's clickwheel. You can turn the crown to scroll through a list or zoom in and out of a map. Pressing the Crown returns you to the watch's home screen, just as pressing the Home button on your iPhone would.

Below the Digital Crown, you'll find a button, which Apple simply refers to as 'the Button'. Press it to access the Friends app, which brings up a Contacts-style collection of the people you like to stay in touch with. Tapping a picture of a friend lets you send them a message, make a phone call or make contact with the Apple Watch's Digital Touch features (which we'll talk about below).

You can touch and tap on the screen too, but if you recall using the sixth-generation iPod nano (the little square one from 2010 that you could buy watch bands for, remember?), the size of your fingertip is bound to obscure part of what you're trying to tap. That's why the Digital Crown is there, to let you navigate the Apple Watch while still being able to see the entire screen.

That said, there's one gesture that works pretty well on even a watch-sized screen – swiping. Swipe up from the clock face to see little bits of information – your calendar, your location, current weather data and so forth. Apple calls

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these 'glances', and they strip out the most relevant information from apps and puts it into a form you can digest just by looking at your Watch's screen.

When you do touch the Apple Watch, its screen can actually distinguish between a regular tap, which you'll use to select things, and a harder touch, which is how you'll access contextual menus – kind of like right-clicking with your mouse. Apple calls this technology Force Touch, and it's enabled by tiny electrodes in the display.

CAN THE APPLE WATCH DO ANYTHING MY iPHONE CAN'T DO ON ITS OWN?

At its launch, Apple showed off a really cool-looking feature called Digital Touch, as we mentioned above, that you can use with other Apple Watch wearers. Digital Touch lets you tap out a pattern on your watch face, which your friend will see and feel on his or her own Apple Watch. You can also draw each other little pictures. And if you hold down two fingers in Digital Touch, you can send your heartbeat, which shows up on your friend's watch as a glowing, pulsing heart. This may encourage couples to buy his-and-hers watches so they can let each other know anytime how their hearts flutter for each other... or pound like hammers when they get really mad.

CAN I USE THE APPLE WATCH TO PAY FOR THINGS?

Yep! If you are in the US. The Apple Watch has near field communication, or NFC, technology, just like the iPhone 6 and 6 Plus. That means US customers can wave their watch near an NFC-equipped payment terminal to pay, just like you would with your new-model iPhone.

Good news for iPhone 5, 5c and 5s owners: you don't need a 6 or 6 Plus to use Apple Pay on the watch. iOS 8.2 just put the Apple Watch companion app on every compatible iPhone, which is where you'll add your credit or debit card information to store in Passbook. No financial details are stored on the watch itself, but the device does store a token, or a number to act in place of your card number, so you don't need your iPhone with you to use Apple Pay.

The iPhone 6 models have a dedicated 'Secure Element' chip that stores your encrypted information – not your actual credit card numbers, but rather a 'device account number' that is used to create a single-use security code to authorise each transaction. The phone provides the watch with information about the items stored in its own Secure Element, and then the watch has the ability to use those items itself in order to pay wirelessly. There's a nice security touch, too: if you take the Apple Watch off, it'll lock and require a code before you can purchase anything, so if someone steals your watch they won't be able to use it as a credit card.

WHAT KIND OF APPS DID APPLE BUILD FOR APPLE WATCH? DOES IT RUN THIRD-PARTY APPS?

Apple went all out for the watch, building in many of the common apps that we use every day: Messages, Mail, Weather, Calendar, Maps, Passbook, Music, Photos and more. A few notable omissions: while the Apple Watch can act as a viewfinder for your iPhone's camera, letting you snap pictures and even set the self-timer, it doesn't have its own built-in camera. Nor does it have Safari, Apple's web browser – all the information you get is mediated through those apps.

Still, if what Apple builds into the Watch isn't enough for you, the company is supporting third-party apps and Glances off the bat. We've seen glimpses of how must-have apps like Instagram, Uber and Twitter will work at launch, and a list of high-profile app partners is here. Indie iOS developers have been able to tap into the WatchKit SDK, which Apple introduced in November, to build their own apps.

WHAT KIND OF BATTERY LIFE DOES THE WATCH HAVE?

Apple says the Watch will have all-day battery life, which means up to 18 hours of active and passive use: 90 time checks, 90 notifications, 45 minutes of nonstop app use and a 30-minute workout with Bluetooth music playback from the watch, which can store up to 2GB of music locally. If you've been a bit overzealous in your watch usage and your battery starts to dwindle halfway through the day, the watch will automatically default to a Power Reserve mode for up to 72 hours so you'll still be able to see the time (but nothing else). Basically, if you plan to buy an Apple Watch, expect to charge it next to your iPhone every night. Apple does say that the watch battery will be replaceable, but hasn't given details as to how much replacement batteries will cost.

DOES THE APPLE WATCH CHARGE WIRELESSLY?

No. The back of the watch has no exposed charging contacts, and the charging cable snaps on with magnets to juice it up via induction. But it's not 'true' wireless charging as you may normally think of it, where you'd drop the watch onto a charging pad and walk away – it's more like your electric toothbrush.

We've seen a magnetic charging dongle similar to this on the FiLIP, which is a wearable GPS tracker and phone for kids. The first few times we used it, we loved the satisfying click as the magnets latched on, but the novelty quickly wore off, and then the charger was just another proprietary dongle we had to keep track of.

CAN I CHOOSE FROM A WHOLE SLEW OF WATCH FACES?

Oh yeah, a bunch – poke around Apple's gallery for some great examples. They look good in person, too – some are animated, like the one that gives you a fully interactive view of the moon phases and how the planets align. And, yes, there's even a Mickey Mouse watch face, a modern spin on the face we saw on that watch-like six-gen iPod nano. At the launch Apple's Kevin Lynch also demonstrated how you can customise several of the watch faces, spinning the Digital Crown to select a new colour scheme, or tapping at the screen to tweak what kind of information is shown. Apple is keeping tight rein over the watch's timekeeping features for the moment, with no third-party watch faces available at launch.

DOES IT HAVE SIRI? CAN IT MAKE PHONE CALLS?

The Apple Watch has a microphone and a speaker, so you can talk to it and it can talk to you. (You can also use the microphone to do voice dictation, send audio messages and even communicate via walkie-talkie mode with other Apple Watch users.)

And, yes, you can use it to make and receive phone calls, as well as transfer calls to your iPhone or a Bluetooth device.

IS IT WATERPROOF? CAN I SWIM WITH IT?

The Apple Watch is water resistant, but not waterproof. You can wear it on a rainy day and have water splashed on it and it'll survive, but you should avoid submerging it in water. Apple's official line (in the fine print) is: "Apple Watch is splash and water resistant but not waterproof. You can, for example, wear and use Apple Watch during exercise, in the rain, and while washing your hands, but submerging Apple Watch is not recommended. Apple Watch has a water resistance rating of IPX7 under IEC standard 60529. The leather bands are not water resistant."

An IPX7 rating officially means it can survive in water up to one metre for up to 30 minutes. Which makes it sound pretty waterproof, but you probably don't want to take chances. Immersion in water any deeper than one metre, or in any amount of water for more than 30 minutes, could spell doom. Tim Cook reportedly told an Apple Store employee in Germany that he showers with his Apple Watch on. But Tim could also get a new one anytime he wants, we'd guess...

WHAT CAN THE APPLE WATCH DO WITHOUT A PHONE?

The Apple Watch can track your fitness information (just sync your workout data to HealthKit later), play music (from its own onboard storage) via Bluetooth and even make purchases using Apple Pay, all without the iPhone being present.

WHEN DOES IT SHIP? IS APPLE TAKING PREORDERS?

The Apple Watch shipped on 24 April. So, head down to your local Apple Store to have a closer look.

How to use iCloud Drive for Mac, iPhone and iPad

BY KEIR THOMAS.

Introduced with OS X Yosemite and iOS 8, iCloud Drive is like having a personal hard disk on the internet. Files placed in iCloud Drive are automatically and invisibly synced 'to the cloud'. Files already there that are edited are also synced as soon as you save. Syncing means that:

- the file is copied to iCloud Drive online
- the file is downloaded to the iCloud Drive of any Macs signed into the same Apple ID, and
- the file is made accessible to iOS, and some iOS apps sync with iCloud Drive when you open them, while others grab a file from iCloud Drive when you request it.

iCloud Drive must be activated on each iOS device and Mac you own. On your iPad, iPhone or iPod Touch you may need to open the Settings app, tap Cloud, then iCloud Drive, and toggle the switch; on OS X Yosemite and later you'll need to open System Preferences, click iCloud, and put a tick alongside the entry in the list.

HOW TO USE iCLOUD DRIVE: MAC ACCESS

On a Mac using iCloud Drive is just like using any folder. You can save files there in the usual way via *File > Save…* or *File > Save As*, or open files already in iCloud Drive by double-clicking them in Finder, or by selecting them after clicking *File > Open*. You can also delete or copy/move files into or out of iCloud Drive using Finder, or by clicking *File > Move To* within compatible apps.

iCloud Drive is accessible on your Mac:

- under the Favorites heading at the top left of Finder windows
- as an option in the Where dropdown list in small (unexpanded) File Save dialogue boxes within apps designed for iCloud Drive, like the iWork suite, and
- at the left of expanded File Open/Save As dialogue boxes within all Mac apps, again under the Favorites heading and – if the app is designed for iCloud Drive – also under the iCloud heading at the top left.

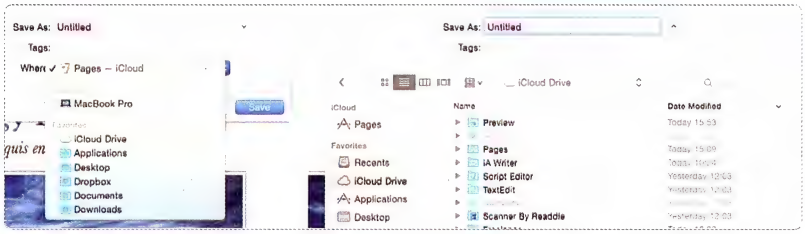
If you can't see iCloud Drive, open a Finder window, open preferences (Command+,), select the Sidebar heading, and ensure there's a tick alongside the iCloud Drive entry in the list.

When a file is being synced with iCloud Drive on a Mac a small cloud symbol appears alongside the filename if List, Column or Cover Flow view is in use in Finder or File Open/Save As dialogue boxes. In List and Cover Flow view a progress bar also appears in the File Size field showing upload or download progress. In Icon View you'll see the word Syncing beneath the filename.

HOW TO USE iCLOUD DRIVE: iOS ACCESS

iOS apps handle iCloud Drive differently to Macs. Notably, there isn't an iCloud Drive app for iOS and access to iCloud Drive is handled on an app-by-app basis.

The first and most common way iOS apps make use of iCloud Drive is by sandboxing. When you select to save to iCloud within an app, you gain access to a private storage space inside iCloud Drive. The app itself isn't aware the rest of iCloud Drive exists, so can't browse it. Sandboxing is all about security. If the app is malicious, or gets hacked, then it can't be used as a gateway to the entire file system.



Save to. iCloud Drive is accessible within File Open/Save As dialogue boxes – right shows an expanded dialogue, while left shows an unexpanded dialogue.

The sandboxed storage space will appear as a folder in iCloud Drive on a Mac if there's a Mac version of that app. It will be named after the app and have the app's icon overlaid on top. The Mac version of the app will probably use this folder as a default location in the Where dropdown when saving files – Pages will default to the iOS Pages folder, for example.

Note that some Mac apps such as Preview, TextEdit and Automator also have their own iCloud app folders even though there's no iOS equivalent.

A second approach taken by some iOS apps is to grant you access to all of iCloud Drive, just as it appears in Finder on a Mac. You can open and edit files already in iCloud Drive, or create/copy new files.

Apps sometimes mix and match the two approaches. For example, the iWork apps use the sandbox approach, but you can also export the file you're working on to anywhere in iCloud Drive. Just tap the Share icon, tap Send a Copy, and in the Send a Copy window that appears choose an output format. Next, tap on Send To and the iCloud window will appear. Tap an iCloud Drive folder where you'd like to store the document and, at the bottom of the resulting window, tap Export To This Location.

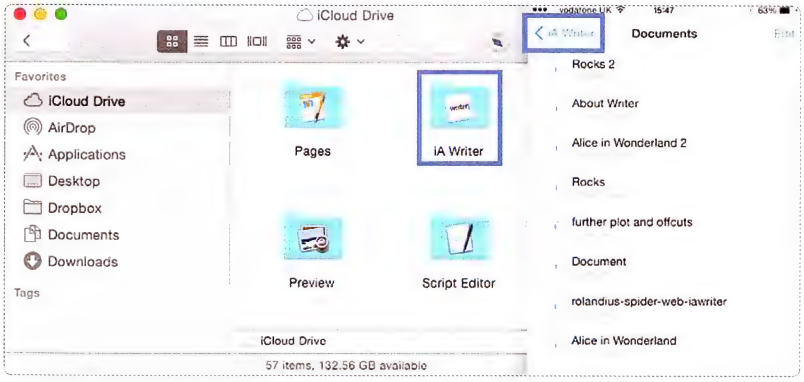
Perhaps surprisingly, iOS devices can manage the entirety of iCloud Drive in a basic way. Open the System app then click *iCloud* > *Storage* > *Manage Storage*, and select an app under the Documents & Data heading, or tap Other Documents to access files in the root of iCloud Drive. Then swipe left on any file or folder to make a Delete option appear. You can't move, duplicate or copy files, however.

HOW TO USE iCLOUD DRIVE: ONLINE ACCESS AND MORE

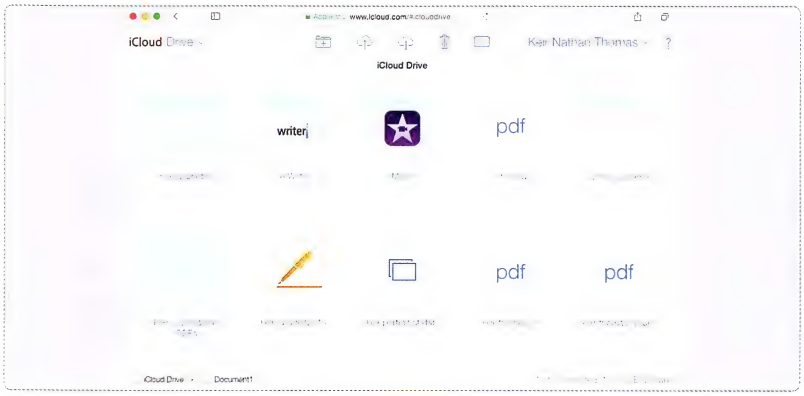
You can access your entire iCloud Drive at the iCloud website via a desktop web browser. Here you can download files, or upload new ones, as well as create folders. Files can be deleted or emailed to others via your iCloud email address – just select a file and then click one of the icons at the top of the screen. The online versions of Pages, Numbers and Keynote at iCloud.com use iCloud Drive.

Notably, you're blocked from accessing the iCloud Drive website via a browser on iOS, even if you use a non-Safari browser like Google Chrome.

Windows users are given a piece of iCloud love via the official iCloud for Windows add-on, which brings iCloud Drive to Windows Explorer in a similar way to how it's accessed via Finder on a Mac.



Mobile Finder. If an app is available for both Mac and iOS, its iCloud Drive storage space will appear in Finder as a folder.



Multiple locations. iCloud Drive is accessible via the iCloud website, even on Windows and Linux computers.

HOW TO USE iCLOUD DRIVE: PROBLEM SOLVING

Sync errors occur if you edit the same file on your two different devices simultaneously, such as your Mac and iPad. This is easy to do if you forget to save a file on your Mac before switching to your iPad, for example, or switch between editing a file on different devices without allowing time for syncing to occur.

iCloud Drive ends-up with two copies of the file, both with recent edits, and doesn't know which to keep. A dialogue box appears showing the dates and times the two files were last edited and you're asked what you want to keep – one of the files, or both. On a Mac, click the thumbnail previews in the dialogue box to Quick Look to see the differences between the documents, although this won't work on iOS.

iCloud Drive offers no way to merge the two files. Put simply, it's down to you to decide how to proceed. More often than not you'll end up saving both and attempting to salvage the new edits in each. It can be messy and time consuming.

Therefore, good practice if you decide to use iCloud Drive for files you create is to ensure you always save and close files whenever you've finished editing them on both Mac and iOS. On a Mac you may subsequently wait a moment before sleeping or shutting down your Mac so that syncing has time to take place.

How to use Find My iPhone in iOS 8

BY MARTYN CASSERLY.

The Find my iPhone service is free, easy to set up, and could be the most valuable app on your iPhone. It also works on your iPad and Mac, so you can keep track of all your Apple devices.

TURN ON FIND MY iPHONE IN SETTINGS

Like many of the advanced features in iOS 8 Find my iPhone uses iCloud to store and sync data, so you'll need an iCloud account to use the service. The chances are you already have one, as Apple prompts you to create one when you first set up your iPhone or iPad. To check go to *Settings > iCloud* and you should see your account name listed. If not, just follow the instructions and set up an account. You just need to remember that Find my iPhone uses your Apple ID to associate devices with your account, so you'll need to use the same one on all of them.

Turning on Find my iPhone itself is very simple. In Settings, choose *iCloud > Find My iPhone* and then slide the virtual switch to the right until it goes green. This means that the feature is now active. Underneath the Find My iPhone setting you'll also see another option entitled Send Last Location. This is a new addition for iOS 8 and means that your iPhone will send location data to Apple just before it runs out of battery.

Normally when an iPhone is turned off, or has a lack of power, the Find My iPhone feature can't work as there is no signal being sent from the device. This could be heartbreaking if you've left your phone somewhere and the battery drains before you realise it's gone. With Send Last Location you will at least know where it was when the power finally ran out. Slide the switch across to enable this essential feature.

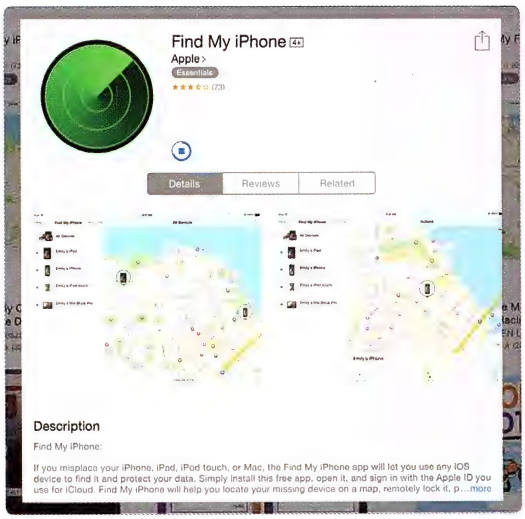
One last thing to check is that Location Services have been enabled, as this allows your devices to be tracked by the Find My iPhone app. Go to *Settings > Privacy > Locations Services* to make sure.

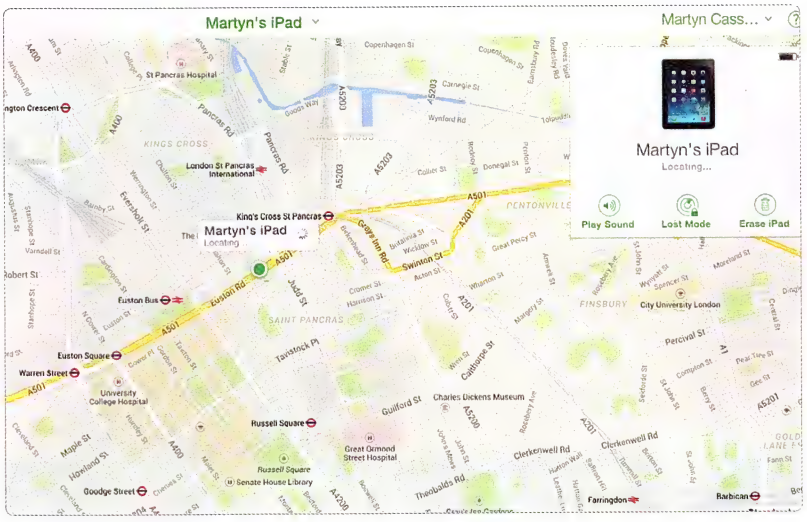
DOWNLOAD THE FIND MY iPHONE APP

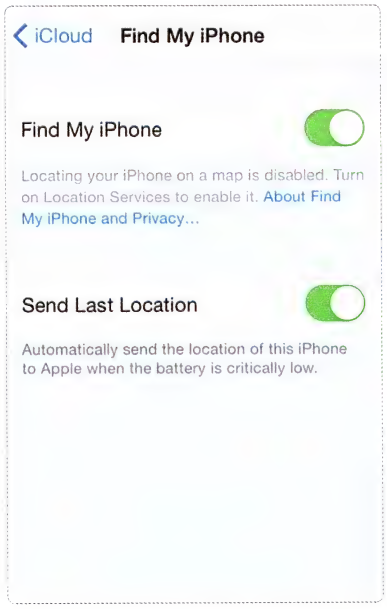
Alongside the settings on your iPhone there is also an accompanying free app. Look in the App Store for Find My iPhone, then download it to your device. The app is useful as it automatically shows you the locations of any devices using your Apple ID, as long as they have Find my iPhone activated. Once the app is installed, launch it and you'll be prompted to sign in with your Apple ID. Then you'll be shown a map, with your devices listed on the left. This is particularly useful if you've lost your iPhone, as it means you can use your iPad to find it.

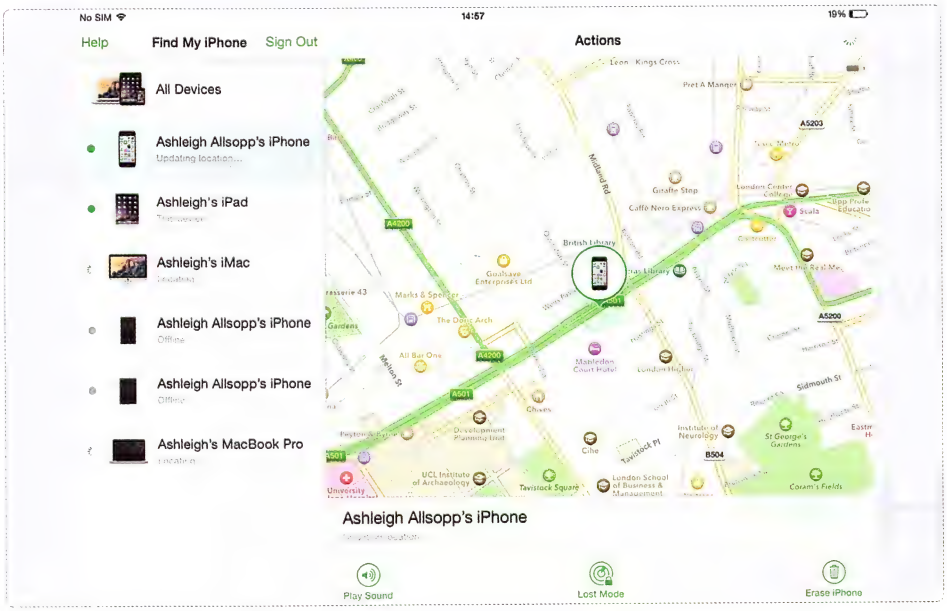
USING THE FIND MY iPHONE APP

When you've selected the device you have a few choices open to you. At the bottom of the screen you'll see an icon for a car, this will take you to Maps and plot a route directly to your iPhone. Tapping on Actions instead will bring up three other options.









The first is Play Sound, which will do exactly that. This is most useful if you've lost your iPhone somewhere around the house, or are having trouble tracking it down when you reach the listed location. Tapping the icon will cause your iPhone to beep loudly, making it easier to find.

Lost Mode enables you to enter a passcode to remotely lock the device. This prevents anyone who finds your iPhone from gaining access to your data. You can unlock it using the same code when you finally recover the device.

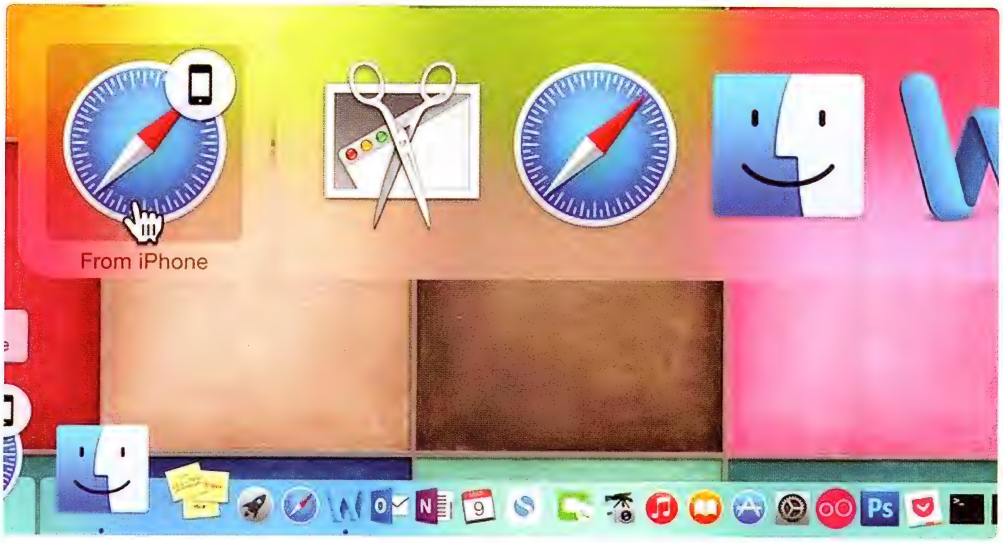
The final choice is Erase Phone, which as the name suggests is something of a nuclear option. Tapping this will wipe all data from the device and should only really be used if you think it's been stolen, or has particularly sensitive information stored onboard. As this deletes all information, including your Apple ID, once you press that button the device will disappear from your Find My iPhone list, and most likely your life.

USING FIND MY iPHONE VIA THE iCLOUD WEBSITE.

If you don't have another Apple device, that doesn't mean you can't track your iPhone down. The iCloud website gives you access to Find My iPhone, alongside various other features such as the iWork apps, Mail, Calendar and the new iCloud Drive. To use it simply log in with your Apple ID, launch the Find My iPhone app and you'll see a map with the location of your device displayed. Click on the green dot and, when the device name is shown, click the information icon on the right. Now you'll have the same three options – Play Sound, Lost Mode and Erase iPhone or iPad – as you would on the Find My iPhone app.

USING FIND MY iPHONE WITH FAMILY SHARING

Another addition for iOS 8 is the ability to find other family members' devices using Family Sharing. To enable this service you need to have Family Sharing set up on your device and for all the other members of your family group to have Find My iPhone switched on. Now, if someone loses their iPhone, the whole family can help track it down.



How to switch between your iPhone, iPad and Mac using Handoff

BY KEIR THOMAS.

Handoff is the future, as far as Apple is concerned. It's a way of linking apps across all your Apple hardware in order to quickly and easily share tasks.

However, let's clear up some confusion first of all. What's the difference between Continuity and Handoff? Continuity is the name of the all-encompassing technology introduced with iOS 8 and OS X Yosemite that lets you share things between devices, whether that's phone calls, text messages or your phone's Personal Hotspot connection.

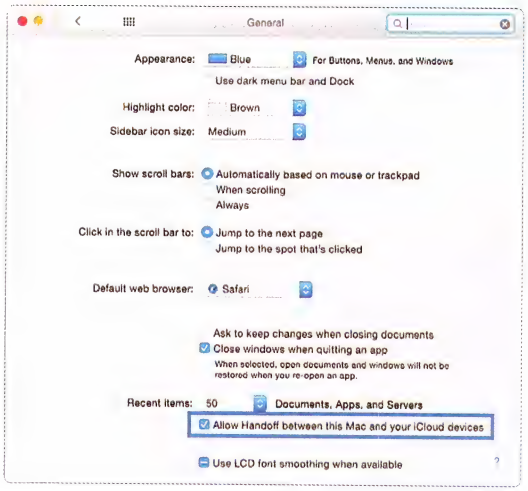
Handoff is one part of Continuity. It allows you to pick up a task started in an app on another device or Mac. Most core Apple apps like Safari, Maps, Calendar, Mail, Reminders and so on are Handoff-ready, as are some of Apple's other apps like the iWork suite (although not iMovie or GarageBand – or, at least, not right now). An increasing number of third-party apps are compatible too.

HANDOFF: BASIC SETUP

Sadly, Handoff doesn't work on all Macs and iOS devices. You'll need an iPhone 5 or later, iPad (4th generation), iPad Air, iPad mini, iPad mini with Retina display or iPod touch (5th generation). It'll need to be up-to-date with the latest iOS 8 version (open Settings, tap General, and then Software Update).

With Macs the situation is a little more complicated due to the sheer number of models out there. For starters, you'll need to be running OS X Yosemite, which you'll find in the Mac App Store, if you haven't already upgraded. One way of subsequently checking if Handoff is available on your Mac is to open System Preferences, click the General icon, and then look for a checkbox near the bottom that's labelled Allow Handoff Between This Mac and Your iCloud Devices. If this ain't there, then you ain't got Handoff!

You'll also need to enable Handoff on all your iOS devices. Open the Settings app, tap the General heading, and then Handoff & Suggested Apps. Ensure the switch alongside Handoff is toggled.



Compatibility. If there's no option for Handoff in System Preferences then your Mac isn't compatible!

Handoff requires both devices to be signed in with same Apple ID. You can sign in via the iCloud entry in System Preferences on a Mac, and via the iCloud entry in Settings on an iOS device. You'll need to enable iCloud support for apps like Reminders and Messages if you want Handoff to work with them, and iCloud Drive must be enabled if you want Handoff to work with apps that create documents, such as Pages, Numbers and Keynote.

Lastly, because Bluetooth is central to Handoff, don't forget to enable it. On a Mac this can be done via System Preferences and the Bluetooth icon, while on an iOS device it can be done by pulling-up Control Center and ensuring the Bluetooth icon is selected.

Note that Handoff requires the devices to be within 10m of each other – surely not an issue unless you live in a mansion! – and may take a few minutes or even hours to start working fully once enabled. Just be patient!

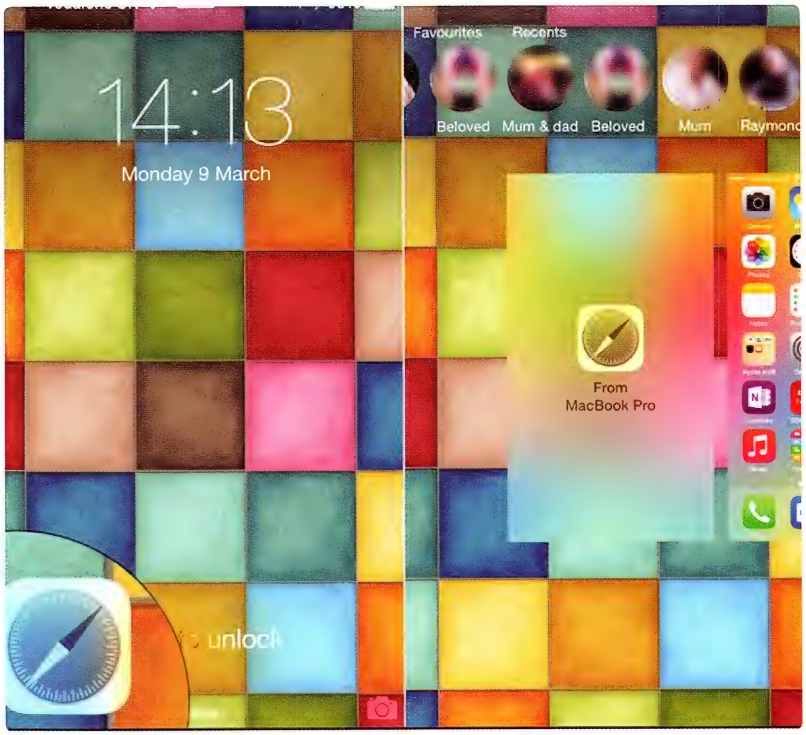
All your apps will need to be bang up-to-date too, so tap/click the Updates button in the App Store app.

HANDOFF ON A MAC

Let's test Handoff in a really simple way. On your iPhone, iPad or iPod Touch, open Safari and browse to any web page (and this is important – it's not enough to simply start Safari and leave it on a blank page). Then jump on your Mac and look to the left of the Dock. See a new icon there? Clicking that will open that web page in Safari on your Mac. You can also use Command+Tab to bring up the task switcher, in which case an icon for the iOS device's Safari session will be visible at the very left.

Crucially, you don't have to do anything to make Handoff share the site. It's all automatic in the background.

Perhaps surprisingly, there's no way within an app itself to be aware of a Handoff from elsewhere. However, apps like Safari let you view iCloud Tabs, while apps like Reminders and Notes sync rapidly, so any edits made elsewhere should be reflected virtually instantly.



On mobile. Handoff appears on iOS devices on the lock screen at the bottom left, or in the task switcher.

HANDOFF ON iOS

On your Mac, open Safari and visit a web page. If your iOS device is locked, waking it up will show a Safari icon at the bottom left of the screen near the Slide to Unlock message. Sliding this icon upwards and then entering your Apple ID (or using Touch ID) will take you straight to the relevant app and the handed-off site, link or document.

If your iOS device is already in use, double-clicking the Home button to open the multitasking list will show the Handoff app in the thumbnail listing of apps, to the left of the thumbnail representing the app launcher. Selecting it will again take you straight to that app.

THIRD PARTY SUPPORT FOR HANDOFF

Handoff isn't only Mac-to-iOS, or vice versa. Browse a site in Safari on an iPad and a Handoff icon will appear on your iPhone's lock screen or task manager. In fact, an icon will appear on all iOS devices you own – provided all the devices are compatible with Handoff, signed in with the same Apple ID, and within range. The same is true should you own more than one Mac – you can start a Mail message on your MacBook and then continue it instantly on your iMac courtesy of Handoff.

However, Handoff isn't necessarily about specific apps. This is where it gets a bit complicated.

Let's take an example of a Mac on which Opera is set as the default browser. Opera is compatible with Handoff and opening a web page in Safari on an iOS device will show the Opera icon to the left of the Dock, and in the task switcher. Selecting the icon will open the page in Opera.

In other words, Handoff from Safari on iOS merely passes through a URL to whatever browser is set as the Mac's system default.

Conversely, opening a page in Opera on your Mac will show a Handoff icon for Safari on your iOS devices.

It's still very early days for third-party support of Handoff and it's yet to be seen how app developers will make full use of it. For example, whether the above situation will be true of email clients remains to be seen because no third-party email client yet supports Handoff.

Choosing the right launcher for your Mac

BY KEIR THOMAS.

If you're still manually digging around in folders looking for apps to launch and documents to open, it's time to stop. You can save tremendous amounts of time and energy by using a launcher utility instead, which can open apps and files, as well as perform calculations, search the web, run scripts and do all sorts of other tricks.

In this roundup, we put four all-purpose, keyboard-based launchers to the test: Running with Crayons' Alfred (free, but £17 for the highly recommended Powerpack option; www.alfredapp.com), Many Tricks' Butler (US$20; www.manytricks.com), Objective Development's LaunchBar (US$29; www.obdev.at) and the Quicksilver Project's open-source Quicksilver (free; www.qsapp.com).

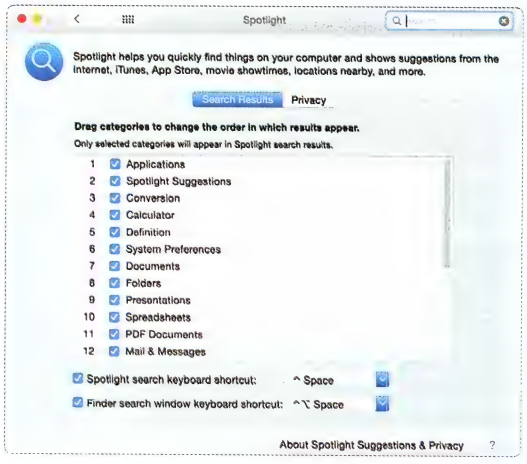
We also take Spotlight into consideration, which is built into OS X and can do many of the same things. Each of these lets you open items on your Mac without knowing where they are (or even exactly what they're named), and they all share a number of other useful core features.

GET USED TO KEYBOARD COMMANDS

With all these launchers, the primary usage pattern is the same. First, you press a keyboard shortcut, such as Command-Spacebar, to open a pop-up search window. (In some cases, you can also click a menu bar icon.) Then, you start typing the name of whatever you want to launch, and potential matches appear in a list. You can narrow down the list of matches by typing more characters or by using the arrow keys to select something other than the first item in the list. When the item you want is highlighted, you press Return to open it. For example, the complete sequence of keystrokes to open Mail may be Command-Spacebar, 'm', Return.

Spotlight uses the Command-Spacebar shortcut by default, but you can change it if you like by going to *System Preferences* > *Keyboard* > *Shortcuts* > *Spotlight* > *Search Results*, double-clicking the keyboard shortcut next to Show Spotlight Search, and pressing a new key combination.

Similarly, each of the non-Apple launchers has a default keyboard shortcut involving the Spacebar (LaunchBar uses Command-Spacebar, the same as Spotlight; for Alfred, it's Option-Spacebar; for Butler and Quicksilver, it's Control-Spacebar), but you can change this to whatever you prefer – just make sure your chosen launcher doesn't conflict with Spotlight.



Spotlight. You can disable or rearrange categories for Spotlight searches in this preference pane.

(If you want to use more than one launcher at the same time, that's fine too, as long as each has a different keyboard shortcut.)

WHAT YOU CAN FIND AND OPEN

The word launcher implies that you'll be opening apps, and all the launchers (including Spotlight) prioritise apps in their search results. But Spotlight can find and open nearly anything on your Mac, including documents, folders, System Preferences panes, Mail messages, iTunes tracks and contacts. In addition, Spotlight can search the web (via Bing), perform currency conversions, show Dictionary definitions and more. In Yosemite, Spotlight displays most results (including Wikipedia pages, movie trailers, maps and so on) right in its pop-up window. (You can see the full list of search categories in *System Preferences* > *Spotlight* > *Search Results*, where you can also disable or reorder the categories as you see fit.)

Alfred, Butler, LaunchBar and Quicksilver display and open most of the same data types as Spotlight, but offer much more configurability. For example, you can ask them to look at only specific files or folders,

Spotlight. Spotlight normally lists apps first, with its best guess selected at the top.

or perform specialised web searches for, say, Twitter users or IMDB entries. All except Butler also have mechanisms for adding plugins in order to extend searches to include items such as 1Password logins and Transmit favourites.

All the launchers become smarter as you use them. For example, if you type 'm' in an effort to find and open Messages, perhaps Mail comes up on the list sooner, so you arrow down to Messages instead. But the next time you type 'm' (or, depending on the launcher, after a few tries), Messages comes up as the first choice.

However, Spotlight always groups categories as defined in its preferences. So if you have apps listed first, then no matter how many times you select 'Many Merry Monkeys.docx' as your choice after typing 'm', it'll still be listed lower, among the documents.

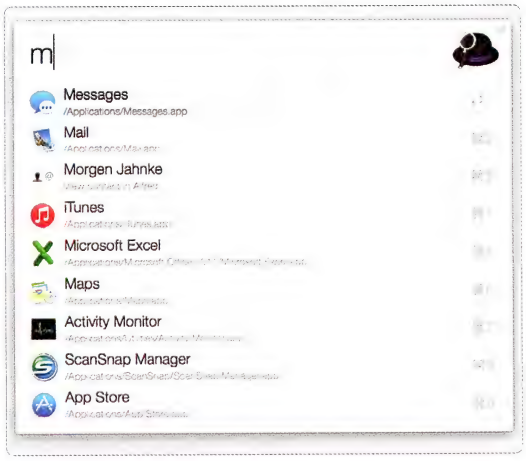
EXTRA ACTIONS

Although Spotlight has many talents, it lacks several key features most of the other launchers have. All the rest can run AppleScripts (not just open them in Script Editor), track your clipboard history and paste previous clipboards, and control iTunes (for example, pause or resume playback). Spotlight can play a particular track in your library and look up other artists, tracks and albums in the iTunes Store, but it can't play an album by name. Butler and LaunchBar can (though not Alfred or Quicksilver).

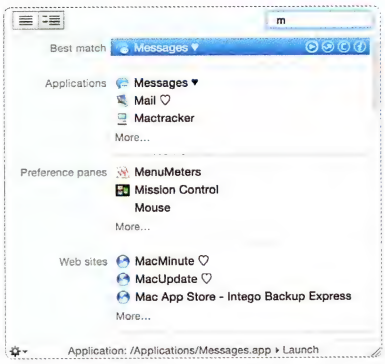
All the launchers except Butler can perform calculations right in the search field. (In Quicksilver, you must type '=' as your first character to trigger the calculation.) In addition, all except Butler let you use Quick Look to preview a selected item without opening it. And all except Butler and Spotlight can open a document in an app other than the default one for that file type (for instance, opening a Word document in Pages), and let you type keywords to perform a wide variety of system actions – things like hiding the current app, changing your volume or restarting your Mac.

LaunchBar can add an event or reminder from its search window. (Alfred can, too, with the addition of free third-party workflows.) LaunchBar can also fill in user-defined text snippets (including variables such as date and time) and emoji (by name), switch network locations and user accounts, perform any of dozens of built-in actions (such as compressing files, emptying the Trash, hiding an application and performing text conversions), and execute Automator workflows and items on the system-wide Services menu. It also lets you perform other actions with selected files besides just opening them – sending files by email or Messages, running an AppleScript, and so on.

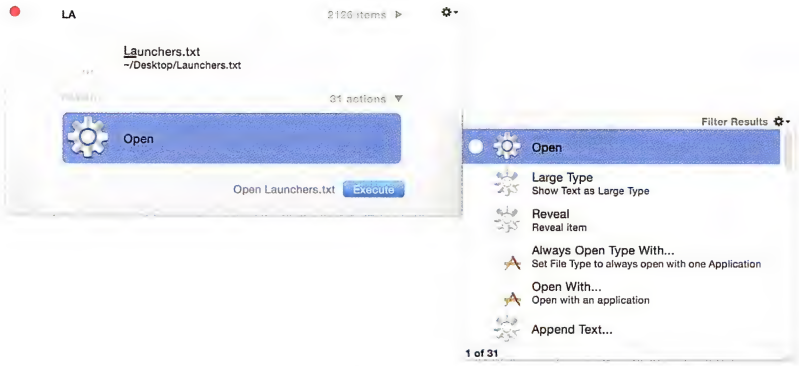
Quicksilver is perhaps the most modular of the launchers, with dozens of free plugins available to add features – like image and text manipulation – and allow integration



Alfred. Type 'm' in Alfred's window and it presents its best guesses as to which app (or other item) you want, based on your habits.



Butler. Butler's window isn't as modern or flashy as the others and has fewer options, but it still intelligently prioritises your choices.



Quicksilver. After selecting an item in Quicksilver, press Tab and then right arrow to see a list of all the actions you can perform on it.

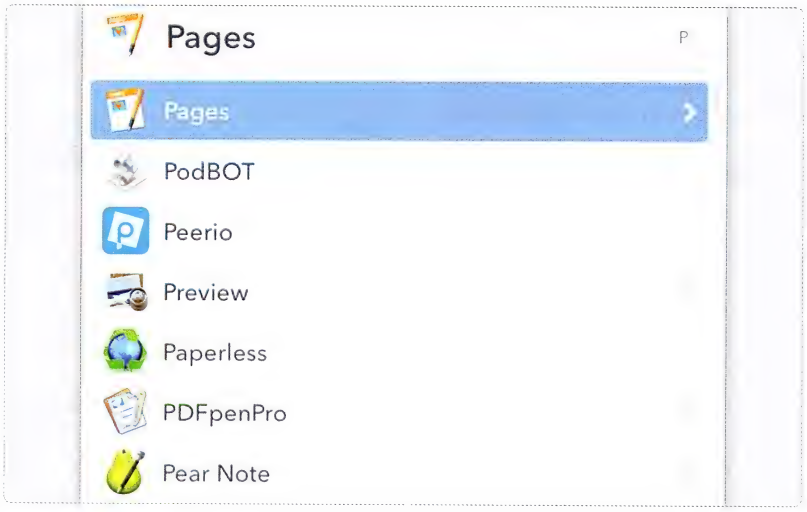
with apps like Evernote, Google Chrome, iTunes and Safari. It's also the most explicit about the separation between the item found (an app, a document, a contact etc) and the actions you can perform on it. The default action is nearly always Open (accomplished by pressing Return), but you can instead press Tab and view a catalogue of other actions appropriate for the selected item.

USER-FRIENDLINESS AND PERFORMANCE

While all four of these launchers are similar at a high level, each one has its own spin on the features it offers. Given my own tastes and mindset, I find LaunchBar to be the most straightforward and best designed of the bunch. You can use it almost immediately with barely any configuration, though it's easy to customise if you like. And it's both extremely fast and predictable, largely because it uses its own index rather than relying on Spotlight's index. (LaunchBar is also good at detecting multi-word names and camel case words, so if you type 'FT', FaceTime is likely to be at the top of the list.)

Although Spotlight's usability is good and its range of features impressive, its speed is not. Even on a fast Mac, it may take two or three seconds for the full list to appear, and during that time, elements in the list may rearrange themselves, increasing the likelihood that you'll select the wrong thing.

Alfred relies on Spotlight for everything except for apps, preferences, contacts and Safari bookmarks, so enabling documents, folders, and other items in Alfred's list can slow it down, although you can work around this by typing 'open' to start a search for these items. Alfred depends on the user knowing such keywords for various tasks – so there is a bit of a learning curve involved – but, on the whole, it's a friendly and well thought out app.



LaunchBar. Activate LaunchBar and type 'p,' and you'll see your top apps beginning with that letter. The one you select will affect future priority in this list.

Quicksilver uses its own index, too, but its performance slowed to a crawl when asked to index a big batch of files (such as everything in my user Documents folder) – and was even worse during its periodic index rescans. Although Quicksilver is simple to use for most tasks, it can be challenging to find your way around its preferences. And some plugins, like 1Password, are currently far out of date.

Butler frequently left me scratching my head. I didn't have any particular problems with performance, although it continuously searches when indexing large folders (such as your Documents folder) – descending into all the subfolders, no matter how deeply nested – just to show off its usefulness. My bigger complaint about Butler is that it's cluttered and oddly organised – it adds three system-wide menus in addition to the pop-up search window, and the preferences are often inscrutable.

WHICH ONE?

For opening apps and documents, and searching the web, any of these launchers will get the job done. Although Spotlight's preview feature is handy, it's less powerful and flexible than the dedicated launchers when it comes to other tasks.

Of this batch, LaunchBar is the most approachable and requires the least configuration, with Alfred coming in as a close second (but only with the optional Powerpack, which adds features such as iTunes controls, email searching, a clipboard history and workflows). But if you already use – and love – a different launcher, the transition to a new one may seem awkward and unnatural. There are no bad choices, here, as long as they work for you.

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Outlook 2011 to Mail migration: When mbox goes bad

BY JON L JACOBI.

There I was, ready to impress my new IT clients with how easy Outlook 2011 makes it to create mbox folders to import into Mail. Simply drag a folder to the Yosemite Desktop. What the heck? Did Outlook just rubber-band me? It did it again! Well, of all the… It worked before. On the other hand, dragging single and multiple messages to the desktop to produce individual EML files – which Mail doesn't understand – worked just fine. How nice.

After wasting several minutes explaining to my clients how this method really did work once upon a time, I went to plan B. Alas, since I'd only allotted time for plan A, plan B involved forking over $30 for dedicated Outlook email export software. It was worth it under the circumstances, but if I'd done my homework, and left myself a bit more time, plan B would've been one of the methods below.

Note: Microsoft was unable to confirm the exact reasons for this issue, but drag-to-mbox still works under 10.9.5, so if you want to move to Mail, you might want to do it before upgrading from Mavericks to Yosemite. If that's still an option…

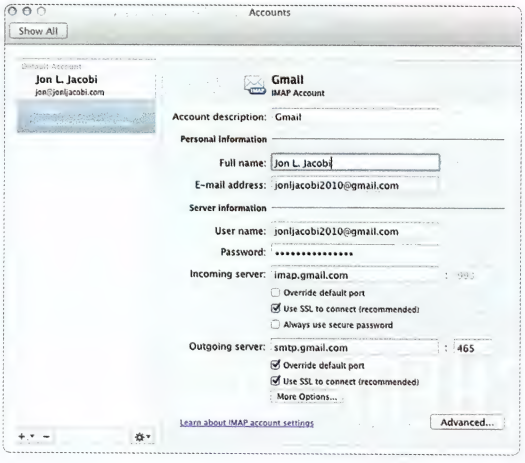
THE IMAP CONNECTION

If you're using IMAP, or Exchange for that matter, you can skip the rest of this article. Your email is tucked away online and all you need to do with Mail is create your new local account using the IMAP or Exchange option. That account will populate as quickly as the speed of your internet connection allows. Painless, easy. Move on. Nothing to see here…

Likewise, if you're a POP user, but are willing to switch to IMAP, your transfer solution is nearly as simple. While you're at it, you might consider a permanent switch to IMAP if your provider offers it – it has its advantages, even if you have to pay for it. Just sayin'.

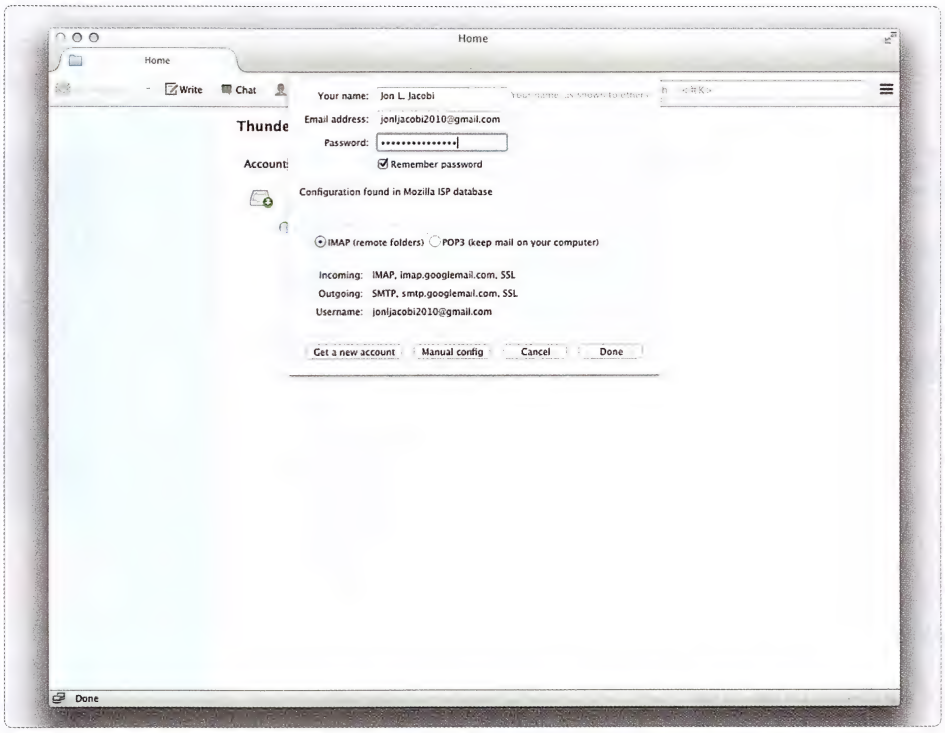
While this modus operandi can be used with any email client, these are the steps for Outlook 2011.

1. Open Outlook 2011 and back up your email – you never know. Head to *File* > *Export* and choose to export as Outlook for Mac Data File (.olm).



IMAP. You can add an IMAP account to Outlook to aid in transferring your email. If your regular provider doesn't support IMAP, just grab a free Gmail account.

2. Create the IMAP account using your provider's settings and name the top-level folder 'New IMAP Account', or some such. If your provider doesn't support IMAP, use your existing Google account or open a new one. It's free and features a healthy 15GB of space (shared with Google docs and photos).
3. Drag the email and folders from the POP account's folder to the new IMAP account folder.
4. Be patient. It will take a while for all the old email to propagate to the server online.
5. Open Mac Mail and create the new account with the IMAP option. Mac Mail stores everything for offline use these days so there are no settings to change. If you're using an older version of Mail, you may have to tell it to keep local copies of your email.



Liaison. Thunderbird is a very capable email client, supporting both IMAP and POP accounts.

POP VERSUS IMAP: A KEY DIFFERENCE.

If you use POP, you're used to being able to delete a message from your iPad, and have it remain on your Mac. With IMAP, if you delete a message from your iPad, it will disappear from your Mac. It may not happen immediately, but it will as soon as the account synchronises. Many users have lost email when they first switched because they weren't briefed on this conceptual disparity.

To permanently retain email you receive via an IMAP account, copy it to a mailbox created using the 'On My Mac' option. Note that if you move it, it's deleted from the IMAP account and won't be available on your other devices.

THE BIRD'S THE WORD

If you're looking for a faster method, you can employ Mozilla's highly capable Thunderbird email client as a liaison. You may even give the product a whirl while you're at it. This method is a bit tedious but it's considerably quicker with large amounts of email than waiting for it to upload and download via IMAP.

1. Create in Finder a set of folders matching the folder hierarchy of your Outlook email in a suitable location. I use the desktop. They can all be top-level folders for this purpose, but it's less confusing to recreate the tree if you have lots of subfolders.
2. Open the folder you want to copy in Outlook, press Command-A to select all the messages, and drag them to the corresponding Finder folder you created. Each individual email will be created as an .eml file. Repeat the process for all of your folders.
3. Download Thunderbird and install it in the applications folder.
4. Open Thunderbird and recreate your Outlook folder hierarchy.
5. Open your first Finder folder, press Command-A to select all the .eml files, then drag them to the corresponding folder in Thunderbird. Repeat until all the folders are transferred.
6. Open Mac Mail, select *File > Import Mailboxes*, then select the Thunderbird option.
7. Mac Mail should already be pointing you at the correct location, but if not, it will be something along the lines of /users/'username'/Library/Thunderbird/Profiles/'random hash number'/Mail/Local Folders. You can find the full path in Thunderbird's Account settings dialogue.
   If you can't see the library folder…
   a. Hold the option key while using Finder's Go function and you'll see Library as an option. Choose it, browse to the Thunderbird email folder, then copy it to a more accessible location.
   b. Open a terminal and execute the command 'chflags nohidden ~/Library/'. This makes the Library folder visible even from a browser dialogue. To reverse the process, execute the command 'chflags hidden ~/Library/'.

The IMAP method is somewhat slow, and the Thunderbird method can be tedious. But both are easy and don't require a payout for software that you may only use once in your life. That said, if you're in a hurry, or doing a lot of transfers, paid options from Stellar Phoenix and others are generally quick and easy.

YOU CAN ASK THE *MACWORLD AUSTRALIA* TEAM ANY MAC- OR APPLE-RELATED QUESTIONS BY EMAILING EDITOR@MACWORLD.COM.AU. ANSWERS THIS MONTH BY GLENN FLEISHMAN.

STM READER TIP

Taking an iOS screenshot

Many OS X users know how to take a screenshot on their Mac, either by pressing Command-Shift-3/4 or via an application, but you can also take screenshots on your iOS device. To do this, simply press the Home button and the power button at the same time, the screen will flash black for a split-second and the image will appear in your Camera Roll.

If your power button is broken, you can use the Accessibility settings. Go to *Settings* > *General* > *Accessibility* and scroll down to AssistiveTouch and switch it on. Press the dot when it appears to open the option palette, select *Device* > *More* > *Screenshot*.

Devon

EACH MONTH, STM gives a prize to the *Macworld Australia* reader who submits the best and most useful tip (undocumented tips preferred). This month's prize is a comfortable and portable STM sequel small laptop shoulder bag worth $99.95.

Your daily gear travels in sleek protective style. The sequel is the perfect, just the essentials bag for your 13in laptop, tablet, a couple of files, cords and chargers.

Features:

- main flap secured with light but durable brushed aluminium buckle with easy one-handed click-and-go design
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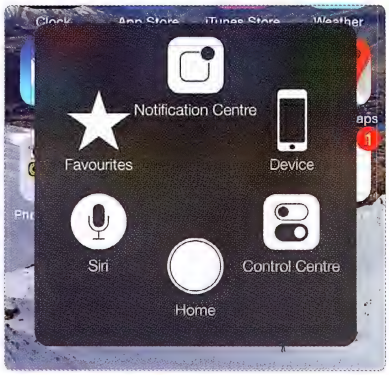
www.stmbags.com.au



DELETING DOWNLOADS

Can I delete my downloads? They are getting massive, and since I was PC user before, I don't know the rules of the Downloads folder.

Sally Greer

This may seem like a simple question to many readers, but I find folks who are new computer users or new to Mac get tripped up on the things that old Mac hands already know.

Every OS X user's home folder contains a Downloads folder, in which Safari and other browsers preferentially drop files you download. I recommend pruning this folder regularly, as it can wind up becoming massive over time as subsequent versions of a piece of software download into.

If you have a large enough drive, you may not care about deletion. But it does impose a burden on your backups. Even though an inert downloaded file only needs to be stored once with any software or service that creates a base set of files and then incremental differences later – including Time Machine – it still occupies space. For online backups, it's more you're uploading and storing remotely.

I'd argue that if you don't need a file after installing software, delete it, and empty the trash. If you do, copy it elsewhere so that you know it's available. Most software you purchase can be downloaded fresh, or a full

copy is downloaded with each update. I recently found several different downloaded versions of Adobe Lightroom, each a minor update but also each comprising hundreds of megabytes!

To check if you've left giant downloads scattered about that you no longer need, the folks at the Omni Group offer a free utility called OmniDiskSweeper (www.omnigroup.com). It's not a de-duplicator, like the software above. Rather, it can examine a drive and list files from the largest to smallest, making it easy to see giant lumps you no longer need.

? GOOD BACKUP HABITS

I'm planning on purchasing the new MacBook, but I am wondering what the best way is to move all my files, settings, pictures and music over to the new Mac from my current Mac?
Jim Kay

You can take a few different approaches, and over decades of owning Macs and using various backup software and media (including cloud storage), I have some strong opinions.

CLONE

If your current setup works exactly as you like, cloning your drive would provide you both with a complete backup of your old system, a way to test a migration, and the least fuss in migrating.

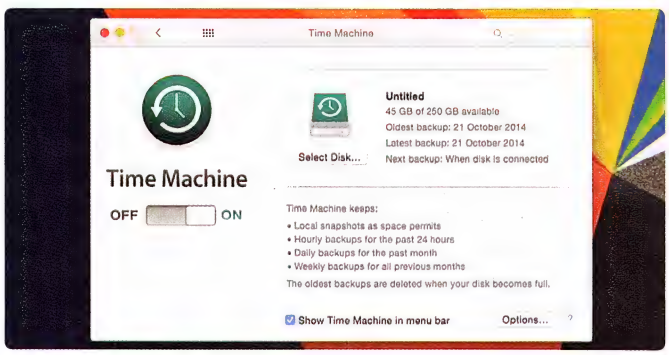
This method requires an external drive, so it adds expense. However, because I recommend that you constantly back up your files with Time Machine or other software, you should already have one or use this opportunity to get one.

For long-term archival purposes, get a drive that's three times the amount of data you expect to store on your Mac's volumes. A 2-terabyte (TB) external drive with USB 2.0 and 3.0 and FireWire 800 interfaces can be had for a few hundred dollars.

Make sure you've installed all OS X updates, so you're not missing files needed to boot a new Mac. Then use SuperDuper (www.shirt-pocket.com; free for basic cloning; US$27.95 for advanced features) or Carbon Copy Cloner (bombich.com; $53.99, 30-day free trial) to create an exact duplicate of your Mac's drive. Read the documentation of the app you choose on how to make a perfect copy, which may involve restarting or quitting some active software.

After cloning, unmount the drive, shut down the old computer, mount the drive on the new one and set it as the boot volume from the Startup Disk preference pane. Restart the new computer. If the cloned drive boots the new computer easily, you can then clone the external drive to the internal, set the internal as the startup volume, and you're done.

On your old computer, make sure when you restart it that it doesn't automatically retrieve email or engage in a host of other activities by holding



Backup. Time Machine is a set-it-and-forget-it solution because it backs up everything.

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down the Shift key after pressing the power button. Keep holding it down until you see the Desktop icons appear, and this prevents OS X from starting software you set to run at launch.

Now you've got a full, cloned backup on your transfer drive, and a new computer with all the same data.

MIGRATE

Alert readers will note that Jim didn't ask about cloning or his applications. If you're just trying to move all your documents and settings, Apple's Migration Assistant is a simpler path to take. People report varying success with the assistant, but the odds seem much higher these days of having no problem at all.

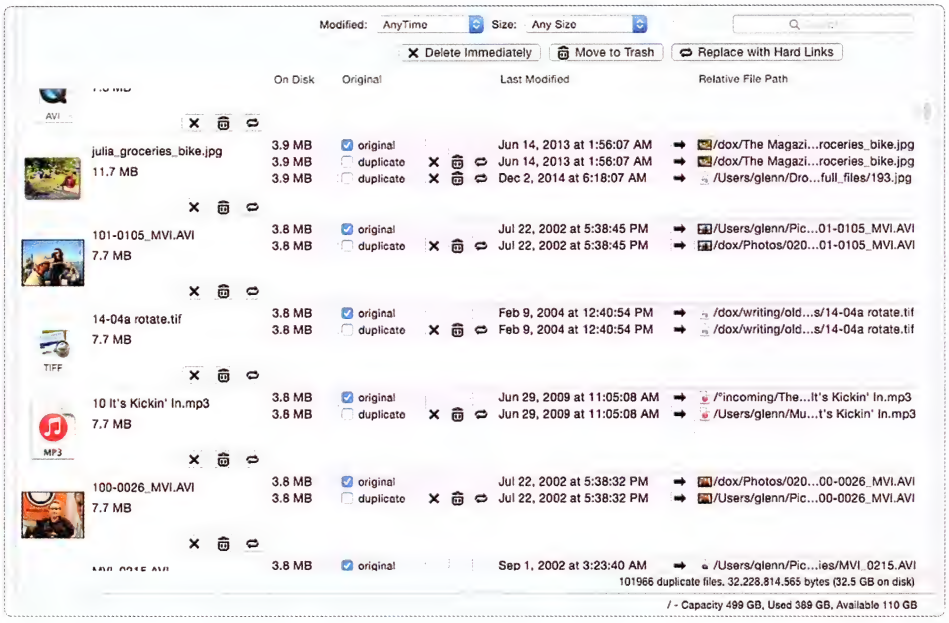
With Migration Assistant (support.apple.com/en-au/HT204320), you can select from among a few categories of items to transfer, including settings and applications. The assistant can work either over a network, via Thunderbolt or FireWire, or from a Time Machine backup.

Reader Larry asked whether one could selectively retrieve files while performing a migration. And Bonnie Beiseker asked if she had to pick what to back up.

In both cases with Time Machine, the answer is no: Time Machine was designed around completeness and simplicity, which means everything is backed up and also archived, with a history of file changes recorded to allow different versions to be retrieved over time.

If you want to be able to choose files to backup and restore, you need to pick a third-party program, like Backblaze (www.backblaze.com) or CrashPlan (www.code42.com). I have had my bacon saved by such software many times when an external drive has gone bad, or I've deleted a folder accidentally.

Additional, third-party software paired with cloud services can let you retrieve files or entire backups even if your local drives have all bitten the dust, something not currently supported with Time Machine. But Apple has built all those new data centres.



Playing doubles. WhatSize is great at finding duplicates, even if they have different filenames, and it can weed out files with the same name that aren't duplicates, too.

CHOOSE WHAT TO COPY

If you're looking just to transfer documents of all kinds and not settings and applications, using an networked-mounted volume to copy items over can be the simplest. I've chosen this route a number of times when setting up a secondary computer.

This method typically can't copy all applications, though some will survive the voyage, and requires that you root out preferences and other files if you're trying to bring those along.

? CONSOLIDATING FILES

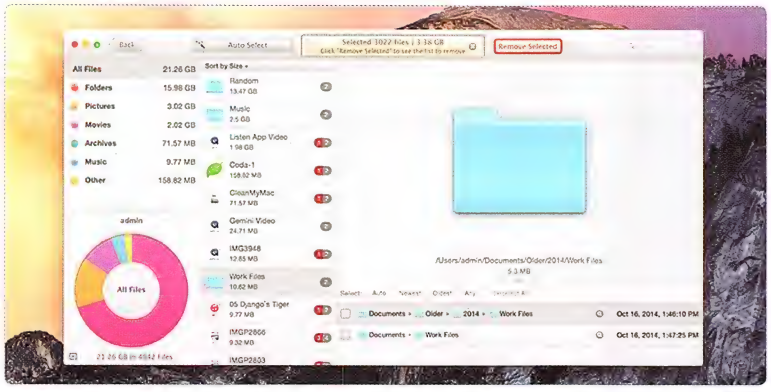
I need some guidance on the best approach to consolidating all of the data down to one drive, best disk file system recommendations, parsing through the data for duplicates and deleting them, and then trying somehow, magically, to organise, filter or quickly search all of the content.
Jon

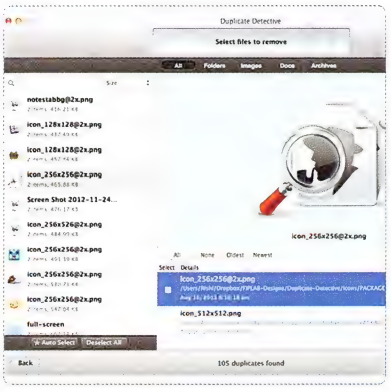
Let's take these in order, and the recommendations will work for any assemblage of drives, Mac HFS+ or Windows formatted.

Consolidating: The easiest way to consolidate would be the tedious but necessary task of copying everything on to a single drive. As astounding as it sounds, you can purchase a 5TB (yes, that's five whole terabytes) external USB 3.0-connected drive for a reasonable price right this moment if you need that much storage. We live in astonishing times.

To keep drives' content distinct, I recommend dragging the entire mounted drive volume into the new disk. This will create a folder with the entire contents. You should name those descriptively, if they aren't already, so you know to which drive they correspond. (Later, erase your old USB drives, and donate them to a charity if you no longer need them!)

File system: Given that this reader is dealing with Windows files and wrote that he already has Paragon Software Group's NTFS for Mac (www.paragon-software.com), NTFS is likely the best format to standardise





Search. Duplicate Detective (right) and Gemini (left) can scan to find the duplicates hogging your Mac.

on. NTFS handles OS X files perfectly well, and you'll still be able to mount the drive on a Windows system. A converse option is to standardise on OS X's HFS+ and use Paragon's HFS for Windows.

Removing duplicates: You have a variety of software that finds and removes duplicates to choose from, all of which analyses the file – it doesn't rely on the file name or other information. Only byte-identical files are matched as duplicates. After finding copies, you can choose how or if to remove overlaps. Check out either Duplicate Detective (fiplab.com; $3.79) or Gemini (macpaw.com; $12.99). They have slightly different features.

WhatSize (www.whatsizemac.com; $18.99), includes de-duplication as part of its toolkit, and allows 'hard linking', a Unix method of making multiple file-system links to one set of data, reducing storage usage without effectively deleting the point that a file existed at in the original folder structure.

Organise, filter and search: Organising is an idiosyncratic task, as you have to have a goal as to how you're sorting files. I've largely given up file sorting into folders, relying instead on Spotlight.

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Fitness devices

Monitoring your exercise is the new trend and ANTHONY CARUANA has taken four options for a run.

Fitbit Charge HR

Fitbit is well and truly the largest player in the fitness tracker market, with as much as 70 percent of the market according to some reports. The Fitbit Charge HR is part of its latest set of updated products – the Fitbit Surge sport watch is the other major new product – and adds to its growing ecosystem.

The Charge HR is a minimalist watch and fitness tracker. The simple display is black most of the time, but you can configure the device so that a single tap will display the time, your current heart rate, the number of steps you've taken today or one of several other metrics the Charge HR captures.

Heart rate is captured by two lights that are at the heart of Fitbit's PurePulse system. The green lights and associated sensor provide real-time monitoring of your heart rate.

Given that many people use fitness trackers as a way of measuring their calorie expenditure, including your heart rate gives a more accurate measure of energy consumption.

The Fitbit Charge HR is comfortable to wear and we found the battery lasted around four days between charges.

The Charge HR is just one part of Fitbit's broader ecosystem. The Fitbit Aria scales connect to the internet and send your weight and body-fat percentage to your Fitbit account via Wi-Fi. All of that data is accessible via an easy-to-use iPhone app. Our only complaint is that the food database is not very comprehensive, although the integration with MyFitnessPal takes care of that.

Bottom line. If you're looking for a tracker that does more than count steps, the Fitbit Charge HR is a great option.

$199 / FITBIT
www.fitbit.com/au

PROS Comfortble; easy to use; nice app

CONS No Health integration

OMsignal Biometric Smart Shirt

When people talk about wearable tech, they usually mean wristbands, smartwatches and the occasional smart ring. OMsignal has gone a step further by integrating sensors into clothing. The OMsignal Biometric Smart Shirt boasts sensors built into the garment and a removable Little Black Box that collects and sends data to an iPhone app.

The Smart Shirt comes in three sizes. The OMsignal website tells you how to measure up so you can choose the right size. The shirt is a very snug fit – much like the compression gear many people wear when training and competing.

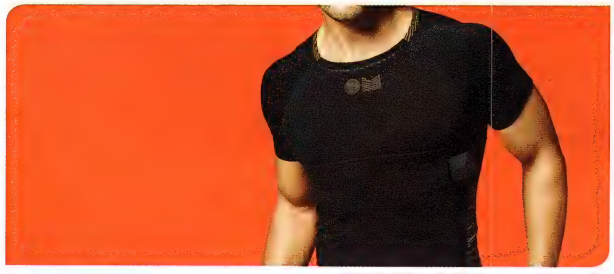
The accompanying iOS OMsignal app captures several pieces of data from the Little Black Box. These are based around heart and breathing rates. Together, these pieces of data are used to determine how much exertion you're putting into a workout.

When we started using the Smart Shirt, we needed to keep our iPhone close, but a recent firmware update allowed the Little Black Box to store data and sync it to the iPhone app later.

Once the Little Black Box is unclipped from its press-studs, the rest of the Smart Shirt is machine washable.

The OMsignal app was the frustrating part for us. Although it's visually attractive, it makes it hard to see all the data we'd expect.

Bottom line. The OMsignal Biometric Smart Shirt is a product ahead of its time. We'd expect smart garments like this to be the sort of things all athletes, professional and amateur, will wear in the near future. With a little work, OMsignal may lead the market.



US$249 / OMSIGNAL
www.omsignal.com

PROS Comfortable

CONS App needs work

Runtastic Orbit

Despite the Runtastic moniker, the Orbit is really a fitness tracker and isn't specifically focused on running. Like the Fitbit Flex, it's made of two main components. There's a tracking device and a separate rubber wrist band into which the tracker slips. As a bonus, Runtastic includes two wristbands – one black and one blue – as well as a belt clip so you can carry the Orbit discreetly.

Once we connected the Orbit to our iOS device we were ready to start tracking our activity. Unlike many other trackers, Runtastic's app doesn't track what you eat. Its focus is strictly on your activity, making it an easy and non-threatening tool.

The small display is inactive most of the time. Pressing a small button activates it and lets you toggle between the time, number of steps you've taken and calories you've expended. There's no heart rate monitor, so the calorie expenditure is an approximation based on steps, gender, weight and height.

The Orbit communicates with your iPhone, iPad or iPod touch via Bluetooth. Although this will tax your iOS device slightly, it wasn't enough for us to notice any significant difference in our iPhone's battery life. The Orbit made it through most of a week of tracking before needing to visit a power outlet. Charging is via a proprietary magnetic connecter that snaps onto contacts on the back of the tracker.

Perhaps the one place where the Orbit stands out in a very crowded market is that it is waterproof to a depth of up to 100m. So, if you go for a run to the beach, you can jump into the water for a swim without any worry.

Like Fitbit, Runtastic is building an ecosystem around its trackers. There are the Runtastic Libra scales that complement the Orbit and iOS app.

Bottom line. The long-life Runtastic Orbit is a waterproof option, but forsakes a heart rate monitor.

Striiv Touch

The Striiv hardware is very light and completely button-free. The strap is long enough to cater for larger folks, but still able to cater for the more svelte wristed. Battery life is rated as seven days, but we found that was a little ambitious, with five days more realistic. It's also water-resistant, so the shower and bath are OK, but it's not designed for swimming.

All of the interactions with the device are initiated by tapping the display. Unfortunately, despite the application of a firmware update that has improved the touchscreen sensitivity, we still found it took several taps for the display to activate. But, once it was on, we could swipe through the different options to check our steps, calorie expenditure and sleep quality. Unlike many other trackers, the Striiv lets you view your data from the device rather than relying on the iOS app all the time.

In addition to the fitness and well-being tracking, the Striiv Touch allowed us to control music playback – handy for the times we're using wireless headphones and our iPhone is stowed in our bag. It also displays incoming call notifications, like the Fitbit Charge HR, so you can decide whether to interrupt your tunes or ignore the call. It can also receive text messages.

The Striiv app takes advantage of gamification – the application of techniques used in games to motivate people. Striiv uses a game called *MyLand* within its app. As you become more active, you acquire currency you can use to develop your own land. As well as being rewarded for activity, you are rewarded with coins as you add friends to your Striiv account.

Bottom line. The Striiv Touch is a basic tracker, but the Striiv team has added some nice innovations to their app that makes the Striiv Touch stand out from the crowd.

$150 / RUNTASTIC
www.runtastic.com

PROS Waterproof

CONS No food tracking

$120 / STRIIV
www.striiv.com

PROS Light and comfortable

CONS Touchscreen sensitivity

Sennheiser MX 686G Sport earbuds

Sennheiser's earbuds offer some of the best sound quality you'll find in fitness headphones.

For many people, sports headphones are more about working out than listening to tunes. We're looking for sweatproof, water-resistant, tangle-free earbuds that deliver adequate musical performances while allowing just a bit of ambient noise to creep in so we can jog on the street without fear of being run over.

If you're as passionate about exhilarating audio performances as you are great workouts, you may not mind that Sennheiser's MX 686G Sport earbuds don't have some of the whiz-bang features you'll see in some of their competitors.

SIMPLE, PRECISE DESIGN

The MX 686Gs aren't clunky and oversized sports earbuds. There's no built-in heart rate monitor, they're not wireless; in fact, they're not designed for anything other than excellent audio while you work out. Sometimes simpler is better.

The MX 686Gs look like typical sports headphones: the earbuds have contoured covers and rubbery hook attachments that tuck into your ear's curves and help the buds stay in place during intense workouts. The neon green cord is oval-shaped and tangle-proof, with a built-in three-button remote (volume up/down, play/pause/skip) and a microphone.

You get a detachable wire clip and a Velcro mesh storage bag to store everything in. The wire clip fits snugly around the cord and clips to your clothing so you don't get too much movement (and cord feedback) when you're moving around a lot. It's a little surprising that Sennheiser doesn't include different-sized earbud covers in the box, but these buds did fit both me and my husband, so perhaps you don't really need them.

I found those hooks to be just a little too rigid, but they are adjustable – you can move them up and down to accommodate larger or smaller ears. I really like how you can adjust them while you're wearing them (most earbuds require you to swap out the fins/hooks/wings one by one), because you're able to get a more precise fit. Having said that, they're not the most comfortable earbuds I've ever worn, but they did stay in place during both cardio and lifting routines. Like most sports headphones, the MX 686Gs are sweat and water-resistant; they're also very durable.

FOR AUDIOPHILES WHO LIKE TO WORK OUT

Sports headphones typically trade away some audio fidelity in pursuit of inexpensive durability and safety. The MX 686Gs are no different. They are not the best-sounding headphones you'll ever wear. They're deliberately designed to allow for some audio leakage, so that you can remain aware of your surroundings during outdoor workouts.

The MX 686Gs nonetheless sound better than any other sports headphones I've used. I'm a big fan of bass, and the MX 686Gs deliver nice, thumpy bass without going overboard and muddying up the tracks. Mids are dynamic, treble is clear (although it could be a bit brighter), and the different levels sound great together. While the mix isn't perfect, it's very good for a pair of headphones that also lets you hear an oncoming car during your outdoor run.

Bottom line. It's easy to overlook boring, wired sports headphones when there are so many new models with intriguing new features crowding the market, but Sennheiser's MX 686G Sport earbuds shouldn't be ignored, especially if audio performance is your number one criterion. You won't feel as though you made too many compromises in your quest for earbuds that can stand up to your exercise regimen.

– SARAH JACOBSSON PUREWAL

SENNHEISER
en-au.sennheiser.com

PROS Precision design; excellent sound quality; highly adjustable

CONS Wired headphones aren't ideal for workouts; rigid ear hooks can become uncomfortable after a long workout

$129.95

SMS Audio BioSport earbuds

Having a hear-rate monitor in your earbuds is a surprisingly useful and convenient feature but audio could be better.

I was sceptical when I first heard about SMS Audio's BioSport biometric heart-rate-monitoring earbuds. They measure your heart rate through your ears? Assuming they do, is the traditional method of strapping a heart-rate monitor to your chest so inconvenient that adding that feature to a pair of fitness earbuds justifies the price tag?

Well, my questions were answered: Yes and yes. The BioSports's heart-rate monitor – developed in conjunction with Intel – is located on the underside of the right earbud, where it rests against your ear and shines a light through your skin to determine your heart rate. Weird science, right? But it's very accurate. As for the convenience factor; well, I never wear my heart rate monitor at the gym because it's extra work to put on and I always forget to charge it. I'll get to the audio performance later.

SPORTY, NOT SEXY

The BioSports aren't anything special to look at. There are no physical clues to indicate that they're packing fancy biometric technology cooked up by Intel engineers. In fact, they look like typical sports headphones: flat, tangle-proof cord, small built-in remote/microphone and soft rubbery buds with a flexible 'ear wing' fin that helps them stay put. The remote has just one button for play, pause and skipping a track. You must use the controls on your device to control the volume, as the only other switch on the BioSports is for turning the heart-rate monitor on and off. The kit includes the usual accessories: three different sizes of earbud covers, a detachable wire clip and a colour-coordinated zippered neoprene storage pouch.

The BioSports are lightweight and are some of the most comfortable earbuds I've worn. The 'ear wing' fin fits snugly into the cymba conchae (the little pocket right above your ear canal), allowing the BioSports to stay put even through intense cardio workouts. The optional wire clip sort of helps to control excessive wire movement when you're working out, but it's a little too loose and tends to slide up and down the wire, catching and pulling at inopportune times.

YOU'RE PAYING FOR TECH, NOT AUDIO PERFORMANCE

Flipping a small switch on the BioSports' remote control activates its heart-rate monitor. Currently, the phones work exclusively with RunKeeper (Android or iOS), but SMS says compatibility with additional fitness apps is in the works.

In my tests, I used a chest-strap heart rate monitor to determine the BioSports' accuracy, and the two monitors were never more than a couple beats off each other.

The BioSports aren't terrible-sounding headphones, but it's clear you're paying more for the heart-rate monitoring feature than audio performance. The BioSports deliver muddy bass and flabby midrange, but surprisingly they're clear and detailed in the upper register. As a result, bass-heavy EDM tracks sound mushy and ill-defined on these headphones, but vocals sound excellent.

Bottom line. If heart-rate monitoring is important to you, SMS Audio's BioSport earbuds are more convenient than you may think. If heart-rate monitoring isn't a critical feature, or if you're already using another device for that and you're happy with its performance, there's little to recommend.

– SARAH JACOBSSON PUREWAL

SMS AUDIO
www.tnsdistribution.com.au

PROS Integrated (and accurate) heart-rate monitor; extremely comfortable; draws power through your device's headpone jack

CONS Heart-rate monitor currently works with just one app; unspectacular audio performance; one-button remote control lacks volume control

$279.95

Zagg Slim Book iPad Air Case with Backlit Keyboard

The Slim Book is light and has great backlighting, but its drawbacks are the loud keyboard and the hinge that holds the two halves together.

The Zagg Slim Book iPad Air Case with Backlit Keyboard is not only one of the longest named products I've ever encountered, but also a competent Bluetooth keyboard. It offers backlit keys for late night typing sessions. Shortcut keys let you quickly access commonly used commands on iOS, such as Spotlight search, Siri, media controls and quick-lock.

Even though I grew fond of the Slim Book during my testing, it had some shortcomings.

IS THERE AN ECHO IN HERE?

There's no other way to say this: the keys sound hollow. I'm not sure if it's due to the material that sits behind the keys, or the material the keys themselves are made out of, but the sound as you hammer away on the keyboard elicits the feeling of using a cheap keyboard.

That's not a fair statement, entirely, as I've yet to find a single key that shows signs of wear and tear during my time with the Slim Book. With each keypress, the key has little play and pops right back into place the instant the keystroke is completed.

The size and spacing of the keys are par for the course when it comes to a tablet keyboard. There's nothing that makes the layout standout, nor is there something to find fault it.

IT'S A CASE, TOO

Bluetooth keyboards that double as cases are often ugly, bulky and serve very little purpose outside of protection. The case included when you purchase a Slim Book is a hard plastic shell that wraps around the exterior of your iPad. It may not be the prettiest case, but it's far from bulky and has purpose.

The case doubles as a mounting mechanism for the keyboard, which I'll dive into more detail about in a minute. But a side effect of this approach is that you're not limited in the direction the iPad is facing when you place it into the hinge.

THE VERDICT HINGES ON, WELL, THE HINGE

It's easy to look past the sound the keys make, but one thing I have a hard time overlooking is the hinge. As I mentioned earlier the case included with the Slim Book doubles as a method to connect the keyboard to your iPad.

Two slots on the side of the case act as the female end of a connector, with the male counterparts protruding from within the hinge. When you press the case into the channel, magnets help line up the two parts, and a click can be heard as the iPad is put in place.

My concern boils to the surface as you try to adjust the hinge's viewing angle by pushing the iPad away from your body. Instead of providing a little bit of resistance when I reached the maximum viewing angle for the hinge, the half of the case containing my iPad would pop out of the hinge.

Bottom line. The Slim Book offers more than most keyboard-case combos do. I really like the innovative approach Zagg took with bringing added functionality via the case. The hinge's main issue is its lack of viewing angles combined with little feedback before it spits out your iPad.

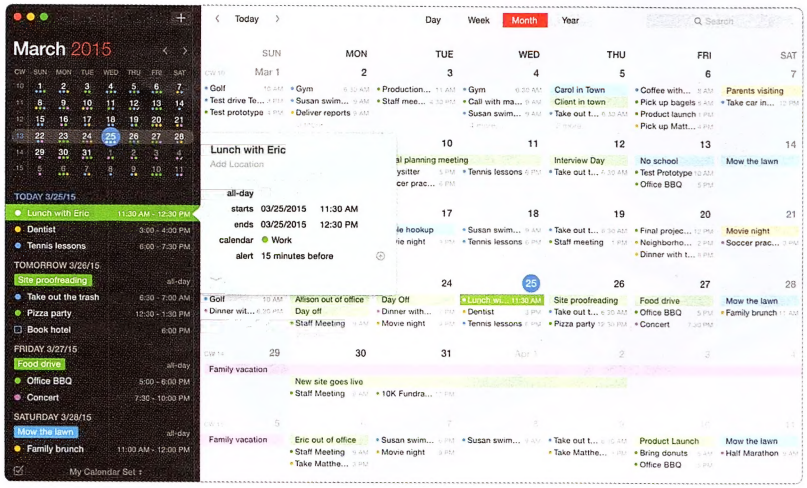
– JASON CIPRIANI

ZAGG
www.zagg.com

PROS Case/keyboard combo is lightweight and versatile; good backlighting

CONS Would benefit from more viewing angle options; construction feels a little cheap

US$129.99 + SHIPPING



Fantastical 2 for OS X

Fantastical isn't for everyone, but this update is a big step forward. A few tweaks to notifications and reminders, but it's already indispensable.

With version 2, Fantastical on the Mac is now a full-fledged replacement for Apple's Calendar and a strong competitor to similar products.

The guiding philosophy for the program is that it's a calendar app that focuses on upcoming events in a list view, keeping that view active no matter whether you're looking at a graphical layout of day, week, month or year.

SPEAK FREELY

Flexibits has always stressed its natural-language aspect. You can typically type a narrative sentence like, "Meet Laci at 10:15 am at 123 Every Street, New York, NY for two hours on Tuesday and set an alarm an hour before," press return, and you're done. The date is set by default to the current one selection, the address added to the location field, the end point figured out and the alarm turned on.

This lets you include the kitchen sink when you make an appointment instead of needing to tap buttons and flip levers later, though those options are available to modify later. You can also add entries in the drag-and-release model on the calendar layout, but even then Fantastical takes your mouse movements and fills in the parameters related to them and moves the text-entry focus to its fill-in field.

Reminders have more limited parameters, and you can preface your to-do sentence with 'reminder' or 'remind me to' or the like. If you're in the process of creating a reminder or event, you can click a switch to flip to the other kind of entry. That's the one click you may find useful during item creation.

WORK THE MOUSE AND KEYBOARD

An app that grew from an iOS sensibility definitely believes in minimising the number of 'touches' with a mouse as well. This generally works to its advantage.

Clicking an event in the list sidebar or in the Mini-Calendar list or double-clicking an event in the weekly or monthly view brings up an editable pop-over with the same options found when you initially create an event. This also appears when selecting an event in the day view, although in a separate right-hand pane.

Flexibits uses Calendar Sets to manage which of your calendars appear. I've wound up with about 25 personal, family, hobby and work calendars across seven accounts, and I typically don't need to see all of them. Rather than constantly display a list of all calendars, active or otherwise, Fantastical offers a Calendars preference to build sets that can be selected from a pop-up menu at the bottom of the list view. It goes further, too, by using geofencing to choose which set should appear when arriving or leaving at a set location.

While this is good in theory, in practice Flexibits needs to take it further, because it lacks a way to create a set of calendars that always displays or to duplicate a set.

Fantastical still has room to grow. Its treatment of reminders puts them into a second-class citizen category, which may be appropriate for most people, but doesn't match how I use them. Reminders that have a due date attached appear in the list with a checkbox to mark them completed, along with exclamation points for higher-priority tasks.

Bottom line. If you find Fantastical's event-list centric approach, in which upcoming events are nearly to-do items alongside actual reminder entries, matches the way you want to manage your calendar, and the natural language entry an appealing way to avoid adding events, it's the right program to pick.

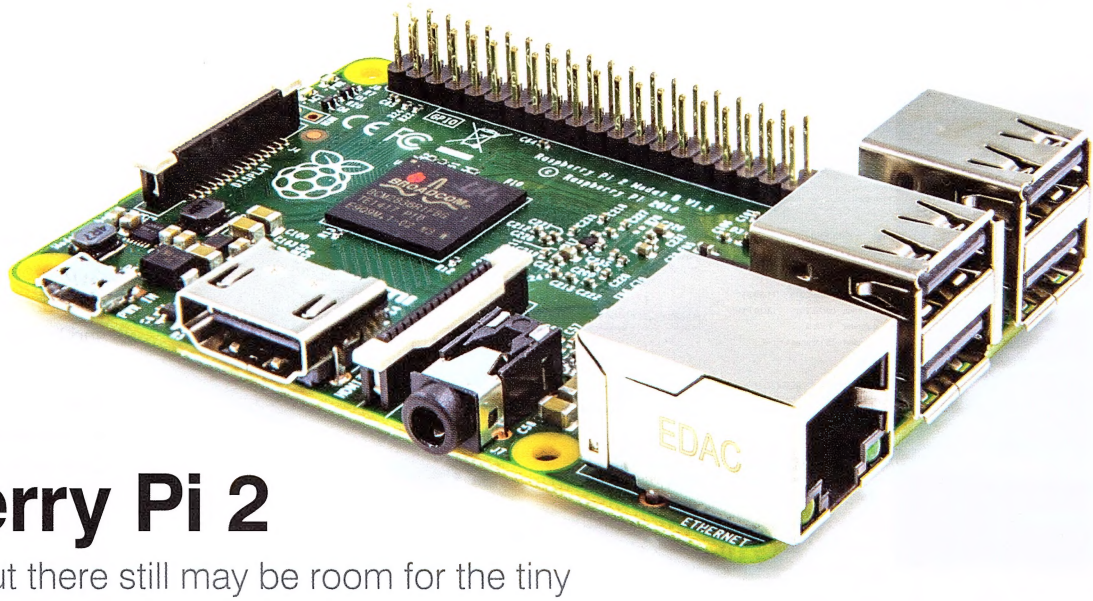
– GLENN FLEISHMAN

FLEXIBITS
flexibits.com

PROS Natural language event entry; crisp view of events for the day and beyond; location-based calendar set context

CONS Poor display of simultaneous events in week view; lack of time-scale of reminders; lack of cross-computer and cross-platform settings sync

$49.99



Raspberry Pi 2

It's not a Mac, but there still may be room for the tiny Raspberry Pi 2 computer in your Apple-centric home.

The Raspberry Pi is a bare-bones computer – just a palm-sized circuit board with the basic essentials to get you up and running. At the very least you'll need to add your own USB power supply, along with a micro-SD card for the operating system because there's no built-in storage. You've also got four USB ports at your disposal, along with Ethernet, HDMI, audio out and a 40-pin connector for hooking up a wide range of accessories.

After several iterations of the original Raspberry Pi, the Pi 2 is a big leap forward at the same low price tag. It sports a quad-core 900MHz processor and 1GB of RAM, running up to six times faster than its predecessor. This still pales in comparison to your average PC, but it's a lot of grunt for $41. The hardware is designed to run Linux rather than OS X or Windows, but the Pi 2's upgrade from an ARMv6 processor to ARMv7 opens up new possibilities. The ARMv7 chip means it can run more advanced flavours of Linux, such as Ubuntu, and it's even getting a free stripped-down version of Windows 10.

So what would you do with this tiny Linux computer among all your Apple gear? You can use it as a basic PC running the Raspbian Linux desktop, but it has the potential to do so much more. You can turn the Raspberry Pi into a dedicated server, install it at the heart of a tech project or use it to build a home entertainment system, which overcomes the limitations of Apple's ecosystem.

If you're keen on retro games, then the Raspberry Pi could live at the heart of an arcade coffee table, running software such as Raspicade with enough grunt to support a wide range of arcade emulators such as MAME. You can even hook up arcade joysticks and buttons to replicate the classic gaming experience.

With a little tinkering, you can also run the Raspberry Pi as an in-house gaming server, but don't expect miracles. Server options include *Minecraft*, *Quake* and the *Civilisation*-style *Freeciv*. Plus you may like to experiment with Stratagus to run old *Blizzard*-style games. Don't expect it to be all smooth sailing; the Raspberry Pi is for people who like to tinker and get their hands dirty at the command line. The Raspbian desktop is based on Debian Linux, which opens up your options, plus you can look to the FastDosBox emulator for old DOS software.

If you're looking for an easy place to start, you can order the Noobs micro-SD card with your Raspberry Pi, which comes with several operating systems pre-installed. You get the Windows-style Raspbian desktop, along with Pi-friendly versions of RISC OS, Arch Linux and Fedora Remix. You also get MIT's Scratch programming environment, which is designed to introduce students to programming and games development. You can combine a Raspberry Pi with a Laika hardware controller and use Scratch to drive a robotics project.

The Noobs micro-SD card also comes with OpenELEC and Raspbmc media centre software designed to turn the Raspberry Pi into a streaming media player. They can stream content from a Samba network share, iTunes server or DLNA server, plus they can act as AirPlay speakers (but don't support AirPlay video mirroring). If you're running a Plex Media Server on a computer or network drive, then you might look to the RasPlex media player software.

Bottom line. The tiny Raspberry Pi 2 is brimming with potential, but, if you're just looking for a cheap desktop replacement, then it probably isn't for you. Think of it more like a building block for a wide range of tech projects, letting you tinker to your heart's content without spending a bundle on hardware.

– ADAM TURNER

ELEMENT14
au.element14.com/raspberry-pi

PROS Inexpensive; flexible; expandable

CONS ARM processor won't run OS X

$41

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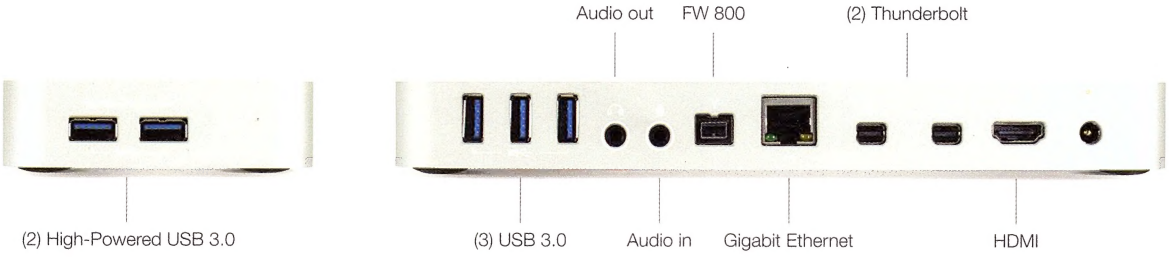

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